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THE

TRANSFORMATION OF SIKHISM

OR

HOW THE SIKHS BECAME A POLITICAL POWER

BY

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PREFACE.

In sending forth this little treatise on Sikhism the author has aimed at presenting to the general reader a concise but complete view of the various processes which led to the transformation of Sikhism from a religious sect into a political organisation. The book neither pretends to be a chronicle of the Sikhs nor a dissertation on Sikhism itself. It is simply a brief narrative of the various stages through which the Sikhs passed and the vicissitudes which they underwent before they became the sovereign power in the Panjab. The author has dealt with the subject neither in the spirit of a hostile critic nor as a votary of Sikhism, though he has been, since his infancy, a devoted admirer of the Gurus, and has made Sikhism his life-long study. He has tried to put before the general public in an impartial manner the results of his long and careful study of the early history of the Sikhs.* How far he has succeeded in his task is for the public to judge. The very nature of the subject puts limitations on originality, but the author ventures to hope that he has succeeded to a certain extent in presenting an original treatment of the material before him, and that when the reader has gone through the following pages he will have a pretty clear and correct idea of the forces which wrought such a momentous change in the constitution of Sikhism. The author has not tried to contradict or preach, nor to excite and inflame but simply to instruct and explain.

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* The writer studied every important book or MS. dealing with Sikh history that he could find in the Bodleian library at Oxford and the libraries of the India Office, British Museum and the Royal Asiatic Society in London. The Bibliography gives a list of the important works.

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The process of transformation was completed by 1768 A. D. when the Sikhs occupied Lahore, and the narrative might as well have been left there, but as the author intends to begin his second volume on Sikh history with the rise of Ranjit Singh, he has thought it advisable to fill up the gap between the Sikh occupation of Lahore and Ranjit Singh's accession by giving a brief account of the Misals which ruled simultaneously in the various parts of the Panjab during that period.

Three Appendices have been added to give the general reader an idea of the contents of Sikh scriptures and of the nature of Sikhism as a religious and social system.

Feb. 9, 1912. GOKUL CHAND NARANG.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The following books and manuscripts were consulted and quoted from in the preparation of the present work. The letters appended to the names of the books and MSS. indicate the languages of the various works, *viz.* :—

E stands for English.
G „ Gurmukhi.
H „ Hindustani.
P „ Persian.
S „ Sanskrit.

Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks.
ADI GRANTH (G)	Arjun ...	1590 A. D. (about).	See Appendix I.
JANAM SAKHI OF NANAK (G).	Unknown ...	Do.	A reprint of the India Office copy, used by Trumpp and declared to be the oldest, edited by Macauliffe 1886.
VARAN (G) ...	Bhai Gurdas Bhalla.	1600 A. D. (about).	The Bhai was a contemporary of the fifth Guru and acted as his amanuensis during the compilation of Adi Granth. The book, in very good poetry, consists of panegyrics on the Gurus, and of moral and religious discourses, (Mufid-i-Am Press, Lahore).
TARIKH-I-FARISHTA (P).	Md. Qasim Farishta.	1612 A. D. (about).	Edited by John Briggs (Government College Press, Bombay, 1831).
DABISTAN-I-MAZAHIB (P).	Muhsin Fani	1645 A. D. ...	A contemporary and friend of Hargovind, the sixth Guru. I consulted Bombay edition of 1292 H.

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Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks.
Rahit Nama (E) ...	Prahlad Rai...	1695 A. D. (?).	Translated into English by Sardar Atar Singh, Chief of Bhadaur. (Albert Press, 1876).
Do. ...	Nand Lal ...	Do.	Nand Lal was the maternal uncle of Govind Singh, the tenth Guru.
Vichitra Natak (G).	Guru Govind Singh.	1705 A. D. (about).	See Appendix I.
Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan, Ms. 1816, Rieu. Brit. Mus. (P).	Mirza Mubarak Allah Wazih *alias* Iradat Khan.	1712 A. D. (about).	The author was present at the siege of Lohgarh with the Emperor. Hijira date of the MS. 1126.
Early Records of British India (E).	J. T. Wheeler	...	The book contains a letter dated Mar. 10, 1716, sent by British Envoys from Delhi where they witnessed the execution of Banda and his 780 companions.
Guru Bilas (G)	Bhakt Singh	1718 A. D. ...	The author was a disciple of Mani Singh, the martyr, a contemporary of the tenth Guru.
Ibrat Nama (P) M. S. 1935, Rieu.	Md. Qasim	1719 A. D. (about).	The author, a servant of Arif Beg Khan, Naib Nazim of Lahore, witnessed the siege of Gurdaspore and capture of Banda. Hijira date of the MS. 1134.
Tarikh-i-Farrukh Siyar MS. 26, 245 Rieu. (P).			
Muntakhib-ul-Bab (MS. 6573-6575 Rieu) (P).	Mirza Hasham Khafi Khan.	1720 A. D. (about).	The MS. in British Museum was obtained from the library of Nawab Samsam-al-Mulk Shah Nawaz Khan of Hyderabad, and is dated 1196 A. H.

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Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks
TARIKH-I-MD. SHAHI (Ms. 1826 RIEU (P).	Khushal Chand.	1730 A. D. (about).	Contemporary of Banda, but his account of the Sikhs is very poor. The Ms. in British Museum came from the Alwar State Library.
MAASIR-AL-UMARA (P).	Nawab Shah Nawaz Khan.	1744-49 A. D.	Published by Asiatic Society of Calcutta (1888-1891).
SAIR-AL-MUTAAKH-KHIRIN (P).	Syed Ghulam Husain Khan.	1780 A. D. (about)	The book was written under the patronage of Warren Hastings. Its account of the Sikhs reads like a copy of Khafi Khan. (Refer to Nawalkishore Press Ed.)
TRAVELS OF TEGH BAHADUR (E).	Do.	Do.	Translated from Gurmukhi by S. Atar Singh of Bhadaur (1876) original can't be earlier than 1780 A. D. Sack of Nowhar (1754) mentioned and British territory referred to.
RISALA-I-NANAK SHAH (MS. BODLN) (P).	Budh Singh ...	1784 A. D. ...	Author was a servant of Major James Browne and wrote the book at his master's request. He is not very exact in his facts.
VAR HAKIKAT RAI (G).	Aggra ...	1790 A. D. ...	Was probably on eye witness of the tragedy of Hakikat's execution.
A JOURNEY FROM BENGAL TO ENGLAND; 2 VOLS. (E).	George Forster.	1798 A. D. ...	Printed and published in London.
MEMOIRS OF GEORGE THOMAS (E).	William Francklin.	1803 A. D. ...	Published by subscription in Calcutta.
A SKETCH OF THE SIKHS (E).	Sir John Malcolm.	1805 A. D. ...	Malcolm based his book on Bakht Mal's Khalsa Nama. See Revised Edition, Amar Press, Benares.

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Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks.
History of Sikhs (Ms. Or. 187 Brit. Museum) (P).	Anonymous ...	1811 A. D. ...	Most probably by Buta Shah the Peshkar of General Ochterloney at whose request he wrote the book. See Gyan Singh's Panth Prakash.
Tarikh-i-Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Ms. Royal Asiatic Society) (P).	Munshi Sohan Lal.	1831 A. D. ...	Sohan Lal was Ranjit Singh's court historian. Ms. presented to Sir C. Wade in 1831. "As a record of dates and a chronicle of events tested by a minute comparison with other authorities and my own personal investigations into its accuracy during my 17 years residence among the Sikhs I am able to pronounce it in those two respects as a true and faithful narrative of Ranjit Singh's eventful life." —*Wade's note on the fly-leaf.* It is a pity, however, that the same cannot be said about its narrative of early history of the Sikhs.
Origin of the Sikh Power (E).	H. T. Prinsep	1834 A. D. ...	First published in Calcutta. See Lahore Edition of 1897. The book is based upon the Reports of Wade and Murray. Murray based his Report on the diary of Khushwaqt Rai, the British Gazetteer in Amritsar.
Travels in Kashmir and Panjab (E).	Baron Charles Hügel.	1836 A. D. ...	See Translation by T. B. Jervis, F. R. S., London (1845).
Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh (E).	W. G. Osborne	1840 A. D. ...	The author was military secretary to Auckland and visited the Panjab in 1838.

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Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks.
Sri Guru Suraj Prakash (C).	Santokh Singh	1843 A. D. ...	Recently printed at Lahore (under the patronage of Maharana Padma Chandra of Jhabbal) in 6 vols. covering more than 3,000 pages. Narrative brought down to 1747 A. D. when Sahib Devan the tenth Guru's wife died in Delhi.
The Panjaub (E)	Steinbach (Lt. Col.)	1845 A. D. ...	Was 9 years in the Sikh service. Based upon Prinsep, Thornton, and von Hügel. Early history very briefly touched upon. Second ed. 1846.
History of the Sikhs (E).	W. L. M'gregor	1856 A. D. ...	Full of details but not very accurate.
Do.	J. D. Cunningham.	1848 A. D. ...	Best history of Sikhs by an Englishman. (References to second ed. 1853).
Tarikh-i-Panjab (Ms. India Office No. 503 Ethe) (P).	Ghulam Mahi-ud-Din *alias* Buti Shah.	1848 A. D. ...	Probably an enlargement of British Museum Ms. Or. 187.
Tarikh-i-Panjab (P).	Abdul Karim	1850 A. D. ...	Almost wholly devoted to Anglo-Sikh Wars.
Thirty-five years in the East (E).	J. M. Honigh-berghor.	1852 A. D. ...	Author was, for long, Court physician at Lahore.
Ibrat Nama (Ms. India Office No. 504 Ethe) (P).	Ali-ud-Din ...	1854 A. D. ...	Based upon Khair-ud-Din's book written during Ranjit Singh's reign, as shown by internal evidence. See ff. 10 and 52.
Tarikh-i-Panjab (H).	Kanhhya Lal	1877 A. D. ...	From Nanak to Mutiny. Does not show much research.
Sri Guru Panth Prakash.	Gyan Singh Gyani.	1880 A. D. ...	Based upon numerous Gurmukhi works on Sikh religion and history. See Shamshir-i-Khalisa (H). by the same author.
Gazetteer of Amritsar District (E).	...	1883-84 A. D.	

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Name of book.	Author.	Date.	Remarks.
Sikhan de Raj di Vithya (E).	H. Court ...	1888 A. D. ...	Translation from Panjabi, text-book for English candidates in Panjabi.
History of the Panjab (E).	Syed Md. Latif	1891 A. D. ...	Best book on the subject by an Indian writer, from the earliest times to contemporary events.
Shahid Ganj (H),	Mulk Raj Bhalla.	1895 A. D. ...	The only book on Hindu Martyrology in Urdu.
The Sikhs and Sikh Wars (E).	Sir G. Gough and A. Innes.	1897 A. D. ...	Early history just touched upon. Account of wars detailed.
Nanak Charitra (H).	Mulk Raj Bhalla.	1904 A. D. ...	Best life of Nanak in Urdu, shows research and thought.
The Sikhs (E) ...	Sir J. J. H. Gordon.	Do. ...	Neither deep nor detailed, but interesting.
Banda Bahadur (G).	...	1907 A. D. ...	Published by the Historical Research Society of the Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar. The only book in Gurmukhi written on scientific lines.

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Hinduism	Barnett.
Religions of India	Barth.
Do.	Hopkins.
Auld Lang Syne	Max Müller.
Hindu Castes and Sects	J. N. Bhattacharya.
Mystics, etc., of India	Oman.
Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus	F. W. Thomas.
The translation of the Adi Granth ...	Trumpp.
Gurumat Prabhakar (G)	Kahn Singh.
Ham Hindu Nahin (G)	Do.
Bivah Samskar Bhag (G), etc., etc. ...	Col. Jwala Singh, (Manager, Golden Temple, Amritsar).

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CHAPTER I.

SPIRITUAL EMANCIPATION.

Nanak's Mission (1469—1538).

IT is usual to say that Sikhism, as founded by Nanak, was a sect of peaceful disciples, and retained its original character until the ministry fell into the hands of Guru Govind Singh. He was, it is said, an ambitious man, and transformed this sect of peaceful devotees into a band of fanatical warriors. It is, undoubtedly, true that the political aspirations of the Sikhs became more pronounced under the leadership of the tenth Guru, but a careful study of the Sikh History must show that the process of transformation had begun long before the time of Guru Govind. Govind himself, in fact, as well as his work, was the natural product of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the foundation of Sikhism. The harvest which ripened in the time of Guru Govind Singh had been sown by Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was, undoubtedly, forged by Govind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak, who had obtained it, as it were, by smelting the Hindu ore, and burning out the dross of indifference and superstition of the masses, and the hypocrisy and pharisaism of the priests.

"All religious movements," the German Emperor once said, "are in reality political movements." And this is true in so far as the inspiration for all public movements comes from religion. Even the mild and tender religion of Buddha led to the establishment and consolidation of the most glorious and united empire that India had ever seen before the

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establishment of the British Empire. The untutored Arabs, when inspired by the teaching of the Prophet, became the teachers of the whole Western World, and carried the flag of victory to Bengal on the one hand and Spain on the other. Europe became what she is now only when Luther enfranchised her intellect, purified her religion, and, by breaking the chains which bound her to the Papal Chair, raised her from a cringing position to a position of liberty, self-respect and self-assertion. Puritanism led to the establishment of real liberty in England, Puritanism founded the new world, and it was Puritanism that waged and won the war of American Independence. All political progress requires high aspirations, an enterprising spirit, "The will to do, the soul to dare," and the purity and integrity of private and public life. And any movement which contributes to the growth of these virtues in a people qualifies them for making political effort and advancing on the path of political glory.

This impetus may come from Literature, or from the peculiar circumstances of a people, *e.g.*, from a natural re-action against the pressing environment of tyranny and injustice under which a nation might be smarting. But the more common source from which these virtues have flowed has been religion. And nowhere in the world has the relation of political movements to religion been so close as in India. The war of 1857 was chiefly the result of the religious susceptibilities of the Hindu and Muhammadan soldiers which were wounded by the greased cartridges. The Wahabi movement which, at one time, threatened to involve India in a severe frontier war, was professedly a religious movement, a crusade against the infidels. The Kooka riots which resulted in the deportation of Bhai Ram Singh and the blowing from guns of many of his followers were mainly caused by religious fanaticism. And, last but not least, the recent convulsion in Bengal reveals

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the same truth. The actors in this drama have all been religious men, and even those who carried the Bomb in one hand had Bhagawad Gita in the other. The same phenomenon meets our eyes if we glance at the India of more remote times. Sivaji did not found a new sect, but he had received his inspiration from Ram Das,* the Nanak of Maharashtra, and it was by rousing the religious spirit of the people, and by proclaiming himself the champion of Hinduism and the protector of the Brahman and the cow that he succeeded in founding an empire. Political sense is wanting in the masses of India, and the privileges and responsibilities of a civic life have not been known to them. They have, since times immemorial, been an intensely religious people, and religion, therefore, has been the chief motive power in all their great undertakings and achievements.

Guru Nanak seems to have thoroughly diagnosed the case of the Hindu community of his time, and found out that a religious revival was the only remedy which could save it from impending destruction. Even if he had been inclined towards politics, he could not have succeeded in ameliorating the condition of the Hindus by either of the two methods of political work. Constitutional agitation would have failed, because there was then no constitution in India. Active resistance of the ruling despotism was out of the question because the Hindus were too weak to make any effective resistance. The condition of the Hindus, in the Punjab, was, in fact, most deplorable. This province was the first to be conquered. It lay between two powerful Muhammadan capitals, Delhi and Cabul. The Moslem Government was most thoroughly established there. The wave of proselytism had there spread with an overwhelming force, and the Punjab

* His memory is adored throughout the Mahratta country and his tomb in Parali, near Satara, attracts thousands of pilgrims.

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contained the largest number of converts to Islam. Hindu temples had been levelled to the ground, Hindu Schools and Colleges had made room for the mosques. All vestige of Hindu greatness had been obliterated. During the four and a half centuries that intervened the overthrow of Anangpal* and the birth of Guru Nanak himself, History does not tell us the name of a single Hindu in the Punjab. Those who had escaped conversion had lost almost all that lends dignity and grace to life, and distinguishes religion from superstition or cant.

Hinduism had never been able to shake off the accretions it had received from Buddhism and Jainism. It had become idolatrous before the advent of Islam. It had adopted the doctrine of incarnation from Jainism. But the onrush of Islam spread such a confusion and consternation among the Hindu ranks that all chances of reconsideration and refrom came to an end. The instinct of self-preservation, in any form, and at any sacrifice, became supreme and all-absorbing. The storm threatened to sweep everything before it, and the Hindus, evidently, thought it more politic to preserve chaff as well as wheat than to try to winnow and lose both. The priests, the hereditary guardians of Hinduism, lazy and lifeless like all hereditary incumbents of high positions, could not unite all Hindus together and by one united action hurl back the waves of invasion. Not being able to play the part of Charles Martel or Peter the Hermit and fight in the open field, they shut themselves up in the impregnable fortress of caste. All who were privileged were taken in, the rest were left to fight their own battle as best as they could.†

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* King of the Punjab, 1001-1021, A. D. Some historians spell the name as Anandpal.

† The result was that whereas the majority of twice-born Hindus were saved, the majority of others fell an easy prey to the proselytizing zeal of Islam.

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In this fortress the priestly class played the role of commander and anyone in the least deviating from the rules of discipline was severely punished and not seldom driven out of the enclosure.*

The popular religion about the time of Nanak's birth, was confined to peculiar forms of eating and drinking, peculiar ways of bathing and painting the forehead and other such mechanical observances. The worship of idols wherever they were permitted to exist, pilgrimages to the Ganges and other sacred places whenever they were allowed, the observance of certain ceremonies like the marital and funeral rites, the obedience to the mandates of the Brahmans and lavishing charitable gifts upon them constituted almost the whole of Hinduism as it was then current among the masses. The priests alone could study the scriptures, and to them alone were accessible the higher truths and consolations of Hindu philosophy. Even they, however, had fallen to the dead level of Scribes and Pharisees. Some of them still had the scriptures by heart but in their practical life they were just the opposite of what they were required to be by their scriptures. They were required to be good shepherds to their flocks, but the only function of shepherd they performed was to fleece their flocks. As for administering to their spiritual needs.

'The hungry sheep looked up and were not fed.'

The springs of true religion had been choked up by weeds of unmeaning ceremonial, debasing superstitions, the selfishness of the priests and the indifference of the people. Form had supplanted the reality and the highly spiritual character of

* It is notorious that even now the least transgression of caste rules, in places where orthodoxy is strong, leads to excommunication, which in many cases results in the transgressors' being forced to embrace Islan or Christianity.

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Hinduism had been buried under the ostentatious paraphernalia of sects. The centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression, and the spiritual subjection and stagnation had aggravated the demoralisation to an enormous degree.

This was the condition in which Guru Nanak found the Hindus of the Punjab. While quite a boy his indignation had been aroused by the hypocrisy and cant that stalked throughout the land. He at once made up his mind to devote his life to the service of his nation, and, by precept and by example, bring his people back to a religion of simplicity and sincerity, to wean them from the worship of stock and stone, restore them to the pure worship of their ancient forefathers and make them once more able to stand their ground as a nation.

Efforts had already been made by some Hindu reformers who preceded Nanak to purify the belief and worship of the Hindus, but they failed to make any notable impression upon the masses owing to the following reasons :—

(*a*) In the first place, most of the reform movements that preceded Nanak were fearfully sectarian, and in many cases only served to make confusion worse confounded. Ramanand, *e.g.*, whose movement gave a powerful stimulus to Hindu revival in Benares, could not shake off the theory of incarnation and instead of preaching, like Nanak, the worship of one God who is never born and never dies, he simply added to the number of existing sects by confining his homage to Rama. Nor were his followers freed from the bondage of external forms. They had to wear peculiar kinds of clothes, to have a particular kind of necklace, and were required to eat and drink apart from all other sects.

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Gorakh Nath attempted to penetrate the crust of external forms and ceremonies by teaching the occult science of Yoga,* but even he could not escape the narrowing influences of sectarianism. The very nature of his system prevented it from becoming a popular system. On the other hand, the exalted position of Yogis and the great prestige possessed by professors of their esoteric science, combined with the imposing paraphernalia substituted by Gorakh for other sectarian marks, placed great temptations and facilities in the way of impostors. The result was that a new sect was added to the list. Hundreds of monks in ochre robes, with large glass rings in their ears, long winding horns under their arms, and a sharp burnished pair of tongs in their hands were seen infesting the roads and places of pilgrimage. The mass of the nation was as little moved by the blasts from their trumpets as they were themselves made holier by the white ashes on their bodies or the glass rings in their ears. The same may be said, more or less, of all the other religious movements that preceded Nanak. They were, more or less, all sectarian, ritualistic, narrow-minded and bigoted.

(*b*) The second reason why these movements did not sufficiently contribute to the national progress is to be found in the other-worldly character of almost everyone of them. With the exception of Vallabhacharya,† every leader held up renunciation of the world as the highest virtue. The Bairagis of Ramanand as their name shows

* It is not certain when Gorakh lived, though Cunningham puts him in the fifteenth century. Barth, followed by Hopkins, assigns him Buddhist origin. His followers are found everywhere in India. In the Punjab they have an important centre in the Jhelum district called Tilla.

† A Brahman who founded a sect of Vaishnavas in the beginning of the sixteenth century. "He gave proof of no small intellectual strength and courage in daring openly to repudiate the theories of asceticism, etc.," *Religions of India* by Barth, p. 234.

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were expected to be the embodiment of renunciation. Gorakh's Yogis were strictly enjoined to lead a life of celibacy. Kabir was a married man himself, but he surpassed everybody else in the genuine contempt with which he looked down upon the world and worldly belongings. "Wretched is the lot of Kabir," says he, "that a son like Kamal was born to him, who would bring home money rather than the name of God." Unlike others, Kabir had risen above sectarianism, but the other-worldly character of his teachings, combined with the fact that he came of a low caste, and that he was born in that strongest of all strongholds of orthodoxy and caste, the city of Benares, prevented his cause from achieving any considerable success. Ramanand, Gorakh, Kabir and even Chaitanya were all impressed with the nothingness of this life. "They aimed chiefly at emancipation from priestcraft or from the grossness of idolatry and polytheism. They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations, and their sects remain to this day as they left them."* It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform and to lay those foundations on which Govind built a new nationality and "gave practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes."*

The qualifications which Nanak possessed for the tremendous task of awakening a depressed, demoralised, superstí-

* Cunningham: *History of the Sikhs*, p. 36. Moreover, it should be remembered that no great reformer had been born in the Punjab and the activities of the others were more or less confined to other parts of India.

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tious and priest-ridden race were not those one would look for in a reformer of the present times. Nanak was sent to school but of education in the ordinary sense of the word he acquired little or nothing. "There is reason to believe", says Cunningham, "that in his youth he made himself familiar with the popular creeds, both of the Muhammadans and Hindus, and that he gained a general knowledge of the Koran and of the Brahmanical Shastras."* But the fitness of Nanak to work out the redemption of his race did not lie in the scraps of knowledge he might have picked up either in a Pathshala or a mosque. He was born great, and though almost illiterate, was, like Muhammad, richly endowed by nature with a powerful intellect and strong common sense. He did not teach anything new, but whatever

* *History of the Sikhs*, p. 37. This knowledge cannot have been acquired by a regular study of books. For we find, in the Adi Granth, very few references to the contents of the scriptures of any religion, as we find in the tenth Guru's Granth; and, besides this, Nanak's criticism of other systems is not scholarly; practice, rather than doctrine, forming the subject of his attacks upon the existing creeds. Cunningham also says on the authority of a Persian manuscript that Nanak's first teacher was a Muhammadan. This seems to be an effort on the part of a Moslem writer to give the credit of Nanak's subsequent greatness to the teachings of Islam. Nanak's father was a Patwari or village accountant, and naturally, Kaloo would have been anxious to teach his son the language which would have qualified him to take his place after his death. This language, as a matter of fact, was Hindi, for Persian as an official language had not been introduced until the time of Todar Mal, the great financial Minister of Akbar. The author of Panth Prakash says that Nanak went to School with Gopal Pandit to learn accounts in Hindi when he was only seven years of age, and began Sanskrit when he was nine years old.

The author of Sair-al-Mutaakhkhirin states that Nanak was educated by one Muhammad Hassan, a neighbour of his father's who was childless and loved Nanak.

While admitting the possibility of Nanak's having sat at the feet of Gopal as well as Muhammad Hassan, I cannot believe that he attained any degree of proficiency either in Sanskrit or Persian. His compositions in Hindi and his one or two stanzas in Persian would, I believe, bear out my statement.

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he said bore the impress of originality, and displayed the genius of a master mind. He did not write long theses and dissertations to establish his points or demolish his adversaries and did not quote Manu and Vyasa or the Koran and Hadis, but, whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong common sense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents. The Nawab of Sultanpur,* the Qazis of Mecca,† the Pandits of Hardwar,‡ and the Pandas of Kurukshetra,§ every one bowed before his manly courage and fearless logic of facts.

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* The Nawab once called him and asked him to join him in saying Nimaz. Nanak assented, but as the Nawab engaged in prayers, Nanak stood aloof. On being questioned why he had not joined in the prayers, he promptly replied "How could I join you when you were wandering in Cabul buying horses and the Qazi was all the time thinking of his colt, lest it should have fallen into the well." Needless to say that the Nawab and the Qazi were both silenced by this frank and fearless answer.

† It is given in all Lives of Guru Nanak that he visited Mecca and lay down there with his feet towards the Kaaba. Being scolded by the Qazi, he asked him what fault he had committed. "You sleep with your feet towards the house of God", said the Qazi, "and you ask what fault you have committed!" "Pardon me", said Nanak, "You may turn my feet in the direction where you think the house of God is not." Sohan Lal and Ms. Or. 187 say the incident occurred at Medina. It is not worth while going further into the matter, as the incidents of time and place are not so relavent to the present purpose.

‡ Seeing some Brahmans offering water to the Sun, Nanak entered into the Ganges and began to throw water with his hands towards the west. The Pandits thought him a rustic and asked him what he meant by his foolish act. "I am watering", said Nanak, "a little farm I have at Kartarpur" (Punjab). "Fool", said the Pandits, "do you think the water will reach two hundred miles to water your farm?" "If the water", retorted Nanak, "which I have been shoving with both hands will not reach the little distance of two hundred miles, how can you expect that your handful will get all the way to the Sun?"

§ Nanak once attended the great fair which is usually held at Kurukshetra on the occasion of the Sun eclipse. The orthodox Hindus

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Naturally meditative and thoughtful, his wisdom and knowledge were immensely increased by his life-long travels and discussions with scholars and saints, both of his own community as well as those of the Muhammadan world.

The chief features of Guru Nanak's work may be summed up in the following words :—

(*a*) He was the first Hindu reformer of modern times who tried to emancipate the Hindu mind completely from the fetters of mythology. It was he who taught the Hindus after long, long ages of error that there was not only one God, but He was free from the bondage of birth and death, that He was above Vishnu, above Brahma, superior to Shiva, and the creator of Rama and Krishna.

(*b*) He purified the worship, and declared that God alone was to be worshipped, and He was not to be degraded by making any images of Him and worshipping these images. He was to be worshipped in the spirit, by constantly meditating over His name, and feeling and realizing His presence in every place and at every time.

(*c*) He declared that truth was greater than all sacrifices and all pilgrimages and the love of God better than all religious rites and ceremonies.

(*d*) That the only way of salvation lay through devotion to God combined with good actions. That

look upon the phenomenon as the arrest of the Sun by his creditors Rahu and Ketu. Alms are given and a perfect fast is observed during the eclipse. Nanak lighted a fire and began to cook a pot of meat. The Pandas were soon upon him and he was subjected to a severe fire of abuse and reproach. He explained the whole thing to them and convinced them that the heavenly phenomenon had nothing to do with the affairs of man on the earth.

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feeding the Brahmans, the giving of cows in charity, the reading of the Vedas or the Qoran, the mere performance of Sandhya or Nimaz were not the means of salvation.

(*e*) He emphatically asserted that the Brahmans and the Mullahs who followed religion as a profession were not the true guides to truth, that they were like the blind leading the blind, and that the way of salvation, the way of devoting yourself entirely to God, could only be shown by a true Guru, who has himself trodden that path.

(*f*) He made a powerful attack upon the sacerdotal classes of both communities, and declared that all were equal in the eyes of God, who, he said, was the common father of all. Men are brothers, he said, and must live as brothers, guiding their actions by justice and love.

(*g*) After centuries of subjection, Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise his voice against tyranny and oppression.*

(*h*) Nanak, on the one hand condemned selfishness, avarice and worldliness in general, and on the other denounced the practice of those who unwilling to fight the battle of life retired from the world under the pretence of cultivating spirituality.

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* Nanak often expressed himself very strongly against the aggressive fanaticism of Islam, and regretted, in pathetic language, the sufferings of the Hindus. Says he, "The age is a dagger, the rulers are the butchers. Dharma has taken wings to itself and has flown away. The *amavasya* or darkness of falsehood reigns supreme. No one can see the moon of truth." See also the stanzas addressed to Bhai Lallo at Eminabad. The author of the Panth Prakash says that Nanak was once imprisoned by Sikandar Lodhi for refusing to show a miracle. It stands more to reason that the real cause was Nanak's plain-spoken criticism which would be called treason or sedition in the language of the present times.

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> Some of his fiercest attacks are directed against those who put on the ochre robes of the Sadhu, and shirking the responsibilities of life sought refuge in renunciation and aimless wandering from one place to another. He had himself married and had children. He had been working as a man of business for a considerable part of his life, and had thus shown, by example, how one could live in the world and yet not be of the world, acting upon the teaching of the Gita which says, "whosoever does his duties without attachment, consecrating his deeds to God, verily, sin does not touch him, just as a lotus leaf, though in water, is not affected by it."*

The whole system of Nanak, thus, stands distinguished from other reform movements by two important peculiarities, its non-sectarian character, and, secondly, its reconciliation with secular life. It was, therefore, bound to produce the following two effects, *viz*:—

(1) It leavened the whole Hindu thought in the Punjab and improved the moral and spiritual tone of the whole people. Here was, now, for the first time after ages of dissension and discord, a hero whom every Hindu† could call his own, and of whom every Hindu could feel justly proud. The appearance of Nanak was a great step towards arousing a consciousness of a common nationality. Since Hindu Kings had fallen, Nanak was the first Hindu hero who could command the allegiance of all parties, because he did not identify himself with any party. Though he attacked all parties, tore their cherished beliefs into shreds, he became

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* *Bhagawad Gita*, V. 10.

† Except the priestly class whose prestige and income were threatened by the popularity of the new Reformer.

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the popular hero because it was soon found that he had destroyed only that which was not genuine but a mere addition or an accretion to their religion.

(2) The second effect which Nanak's teaching produced was to show to the Hindus that the highest worldly ambition was not incompatible with the purest and godliest life. Buddhism and Jainism and later Hinduism, as affected by both, have always held forth renunciation as the highest virtue, and have looked upon worldly power and prosperity as contemptible, and to be tolerated in certain cases as a mere necessary evil. Nanak changed all this. He put the seal of his sanction and approval on all worldly pursuits, provided that they were not indulged in at the cost of righteousness and truth.

This was evidently the seed which under the fostering care of Nanak's successors grew into the gigantic tree of the Khalsa power.

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CHAPTER II.

SIKHS FORM A COMMUNITY.

First Steps at Organization (1538—1575).

Nanak lived nearly seventy years, and towards the end of his life, after travelling through the length and breadth of India and some foreign countries, he had settled down at Kartarpur, a village which had been founded by himself. Here he built a Dharmsala, and continued to teach the crowds of people who now flocked to him from all parts of the Punjab. When he died, in 1538, he had already transformed the lives of thousands of Hindus who had come in personal contact with him, and by his noble life and inspiring teaching had produced a new atmosphere in the country which no one could breathe without being healthier and stronger in the spirit. Nanak left the Hindus of the Punjab immensely better than he had found them. Their belief had been ennobled, their worship purified, the rigidity of caste considerably broken, their minds greatly emancipated, and they were now more fit to enter on the career of national progress to which Nanak's successors were destined to lead them. The seed had been sown. It had fallen on good soil, and with careful nursing it was bound to yield a plentiful crop when the time became ripe for it.

Although the object of Nanak was simply to leaven the social and religious thought of the Hindus, and to improve the general tone of their moral and spiritual life, and he had never thought of founding a sect, yet he was anxious that his work should continue after his death.* With this object

* Nanak had, no doubt, greatly succeeded in reviving the dying Hindu Society, which was now fairly on the way to convalescence, but environments were still so unfavourable, the orthodox priesthood being still so strong, that he feared a relapse, unless some one was appointed to look after the patient. Had Nanak died without a successor there would have been no Sikhism to-day or at best simply another Kabirism.

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in view he appointed as his successor a Khatri, Lehna by name, one of his own disciples, whom he preferred to his own sons, and who had shown, by his exemplary character, extraordinary piety and unflinching devotion *, his fitness to occupy Nanak's position.

Lehna, who was now called Angad, forming as it were a part and parcel of his Guru's self, no sooner ascended the Gaddi than he realised the danger to which the mission of his master was exposed. For all practical purposes the people were as orthodox as Nanak had found them. The ritualistic side of Hinduism had not been at all interfered with by Nanak. The rites and ceremonies were performed on the same lines and by the same priests, and though the value of such observances was considerably lowered in the eyes of those who had come in contact with Nanak, they were still adhered to.

The personal magnetism of Nanak was so great that he had succeeded in winning the love and allegiance of thousands who had come under his direct influence. And there is not the least doubt, that if he were so minded he could have easily established a church of his own, introduced his own social and religious code, and established an independent community entirely free from the restrictions of caste, and the domination of Hindu priesthood. This was not, however, his object. He did not want to cut himself off from the Hindu community. He wanted to live in it, work with it, and by his noble example and lofty teaching to raise it to a higher level of social and religious life. His

* Many stories of Lehna's devotion are given in the Panth Prakash and other books, *e. g.*, his jumping into a muddy pool at the instance of Nanak to take out a cup; his readiness even to eat a carcase at his Guru's bidding, his faithful adherence to Nanak during the latter's feigned insanity when even his own sons had deserted him, &c.

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successor followed the same policy, but he realized that Nanak's mission should nevertheless possess a distinctive character, and his followers, though forming a part of the main body, should have an individuality of their own. He perceived the necessity of saving them from total absorption by the Hindu mass. In order that the influences started by Nanak might continue to work, it was essential that those influences should be perpetuated, and a community created, which, though forming a part of the same host, should march a little apart as its advance guard.*

Guru Angad employed the following three means to secure the individuality of those who had accepted Nanak's Mission :—

(1) The first and most important was the invention of Gurumukhi characters† which became the special Script of the Sikhs, and in which all their sacred books are written. Gurumukh in the Adi Granth and generally in the Punjab, is applied to those who faithfully follow the commands of the Guru, as opposed to *Manmukh*, or one who looks to his own will for help and guidance. The very name of the new

* It might sound strange to call these uneducated people as the advance guard of Hinduism, but the fact is that of learning, dialectic Theology and Philosophy, the Hindus had, even in those dark days, enough. It was faith, devotion and earnestness that they lacked, and ignorant as the early Sikhs were, by virtue of these qualifications they led the way and drew the whole Punjab after them.

† From a nationalistic point of view it might be objected that the new Script provided a new line of cleavage between the Hindus and the Sikhs and added a fresh difficulty to the task of future Hindu reformers to consolidate the whole Hindu race. It might also be objected that the Gurumukhi alphabet is crude and imperfect and was quite unnecessary.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that it is more easily acquired than any other alphabet, while as a means of asserting Sikh individuality, its value cannot be overrated. No more crushing blow to the predominance of the Brahman could be devised, and if Brahmans are still supreme even among the Sikhs it is because of their innate superiority.

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Script, therefore, reminded those who employed it, of their duty towards their Guru, and constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of Hinduism, that they were regenerated, liberated and saved. It also dealt a powerful blow to the domination of the priestly class. The importance of the Brahman greatly rested upon his knowledge of Sanskrit which was the language of religion. When Punjabi, written in Gurumukhi characters, attained to the same position of sanctity, as it soon after did, the prestige of the Brahman was bound to suffer. The third effect of the introduction of this new alphabet was to increase the number of literates, and, by making religious literature accessible to the masses in their mother-tongue, to facilitate the reform work of the Gurus.

(2) The next step taken by Guru Angad was the compilation of Guru Nanak's memoirs. Bála, who had been the lifelong companion of the deceased Guru and had accompanied him in nearly all his travels, related from his memory all that he had seen and heard of Nanak since his boyhood to his death, and the Guru committed it to writing. Nanak was the first Punjabi poet to achieve any popularity and fame, and his memoirs compiled by Guru Angad formed the first prose work in the Punjabi language.* The book soon became a favourite with the followers of Nanak, and as it contained his teaching as well as memoirs, it at once established its position as the sacred book of the Sikhs,† and the Rámáyana and Mahábhárta being inaccessible to them, it became the only source of moral and religious instruction to thousands who never

* It was not only the first prose work of the Punjabi literature, but, so far as I know, it was the first religious work written in the popular dialect of the province.

† In this respect it resembled the New Testament more than any religious work of the Hindus, parables and miracles not excepted.

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knew a word of Sanskrit, and could not, or would not, pay the Brahmans.

(3) The third method adopted by Angad to popularise the mission of Nanak and keep up the enthusiasm of his followers was the starting of a *Langar* or a free dining hall. The system had already been set on foot by Nanak and was simply enlarged and expanded by Angad. The institution proved a powerful aid in the propaganda work. In the first place it did the same work as the orphanages, hospitals, asylums and other charitable institutions started by the Christian Missionaries, not only as a means of relieving the destitute and the needy, but also as a most efficient means of advertisement and popularity. Secondly, it gave a new direction to the charities of the Guru's followers. Of alms-houses, supported by Hindu individuals, there was, and has always been, plenty, but the *Langar* of the Guru was probably the first to be supported by the combined contributions of a community, and taught the Sikhs the first lesson of contributing money towards a common fund. Thirdly, charity being the root of religion and the charities of the Sikhs flowing into the fund of the Guru, their religious sentiment could not move in any other direction, so that the duty of supporting the *Langar* not only concentrated the attention of the Sikhs upon their Guru, but being the object of common patronage and support, it served as a strong bond of union among the new brotherhood. Fourthly, this institution proved a powerful weapon to break the crust of caste, as all Sikhs,* rich or poor, Brahmans or Sudras, dined together without any distinction.

By these measures and active preaching work Guru Angad succeeded in giving a sort of local hibitation and a name to

* Though principally meant for the poor, the *Langar* also supplied food to those followers who went on a visit to the Guru, and even princes thought it their duty and an act of merit to dine in the Guru's hall with all castes and classes present there.

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the mission of Nanak. The Sikhs now began gradually to drift away from the Orthodox Hindu Society and form a class, a sort of new brotherhood, by themselves. In their observance of religious rites they were like their Hindu contemporaries and still retained many of their superstitions, but in the simplicity of their faith, their ardour and earnestness, they rather resembled their Aryan ancestors—unsophisticated by casuistry, untrammelled by caste, simple, manly and enthusiastic in their pure and primitive faith.

The measures adopted by the second Guru had considerably contributed to the inception of a new community, and had sown the first seeds of some kind of organisation among the Sikhs. But the Sikhs were so far only a religious community and there were in them as yet no marked traits by which they could be distinguished from ninety-nine other religious sects into which Hinduism was at that time divided. Hinduism is essentially other-worldly, and while religious enthusiasm leads a Muhammadan to the field of battle, and a Christian to the deserts of Africa to preach the Gospel there, a Hindu, when moved by strong religious emotion, is driven inwards, and falls into a frame of mind which impresses him with the nothingness of the world and the folly and vanity of all human desires. A Vedic Hindu was no doubt different, and was never ashamed of wishing for all sorts of worldly blessings, for children, for wealth, for valour, for freedom, for kingdom, for victory and glory, and last but not least even for the annihilation of his enemies. A Hindu of the modern times under centuries of enervating influence of Jainism and demoralising foreign subjection is quite a different creature from his Aryan ancestors. When he is moved by religion, the sentiments of tenderness, contentment, unworldliness are aroused more strongly in him than courage, enthusiasm, philanthropy and missionary spirit.

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Sikhism in its earlier stages was, therefore, exposed to a serious danger. It was not only liable to relapse into orthodoxy, against which Guru Angad had tried his best to guard it, but there was the greater danger of its degenerating into a narrow sect of ascetical enthusiasts or fanatics. There is no doubt that Guru Nanak was himself a married man and had not spoken of married life in contemptuous or condemnatory terms. But the transitory character of all earthly pleasures and possessions and the hollowness of all earthly love and friendship* had been so constantly hammered upon even by him that an active zeal for wordly pursuits was nearly as far from a Hindu heart as it had been before the advent of Nanak. His followers were still prone to believe that the world was nothing, that it was all *maya*, a delusion and a mirage.

This danger was heightened by the co-existence of a rival system which also *prima facie* possessed the same credentials, and claimed the same amount of sanctity as Sikhism proper. Guru Nanak had two sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Chand. The latter married and settled down as a worldly man, but Sri Chand renounced the world, and became an ascetic. He founded the *Udasi* sect and enjoined upon his followers to remain single and have no fixed homes and no property. The other tenets of the sect were the same as those of Sikhism and it regarded Nanak with the same veneration as the Sikhs did. Sri Chand lived to be a very old man, and while Sikhism had lost its founder Udasism flourished under the personal care and guidance of its propounder. And as the reverence and adherence com-

* In the Panth Prakash Nanak is described to have impressed the point upon the minds of his followers by comparing the world to an ever-young and charming maiden always trying to ensnare mankind by her blandishments. The majority fall a prey to her machinations. It is only the noble and the brave who can escape her charms.

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manded by a system in India are proportionate to the amount of self-denial and renunciation practised by its founder and followers, Udasism was gaining ground every day. Then again when it came to the time of the Third Guru, another circumstance turned up which gave the question a personal character. Amar Das, the third Guru, had been appointed by Guru Angad, and the question now was whether to support and follow the son of Nanak himself or the nominee of his nominee. Pious as Amar Das surely was, his rival possessed the great advantage of being a recluse and ascetic, and, therefore, apparently superior as a spiritual guide. The tide was turning in his rival's favour, and it required all the power and statesmanship of Amar Das to save the infant church from an early death. Happily for the Khalsa, the old Guru rose to the occasion and saved it from a premature grave. The Guru appealed to the people by pointing out the example set by Guru Nanak himself, how one could live in the world and still not be of the world.* He pointed out to them that Guru Nanak had struck out a middle path between asceticism and worldliness, as was amply shown by the fact that in choosing his successor he had passed over both his sons, one for over-worldliness, and the other, the founder of Udasism himself, for his asceticism. On the other hand, fortunately for Amar Das, Sri Chand was a real ascetic and with true cynical indifference, characteristic of his sect, did not care to contend for the leadership of the infant church, perhaps also because the leadership as yet carried no great power or prestige so as to appeal to the lower sentiments of the great recluse.

There being no active opposition, Guru Amardas won an easy and complete victory over his formidable rival, and though the Udásis are still to be met with in all parts of the Punjab, the Sikhs were once for all separated from them,

* *Grihasth manh udas*, viz., "Renunciation while in the world" was the motto placed by this Guru before his followers. See also Gita, V. 10.

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and, raised above asceticism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress.

The credit is also due to the same Guru for taking the first steps towards the organisation of the Sikhs. Their numbers had increased and they were spread over the whole province of the Punjab. The work of teaching and preaching and administering to their spiritual wants could not, therefore, be carried on properly. Guru Amar Das, consequently, divided the whole country inhabitated by his followers into twenty-two dioceses, or *Manjas** as they were called. A pious and influential Sikh was placed at the head of each province who acted as a bishop and vicegerent of the Guru, and carried on the pastoral work in his diocese. I have not been able to discover the names of these provinces or their incumbents. *Suraj Prakash* has devoted about 3,000 large pages of small type to the history of the Gurus, but has absolutely made no mention of any of these *Manjas*. *Panth Prakash* merely quotes the analogy of Akbar's twenty-two provinces and of bankers' and merchants' branches, and says that the Guru likewise established twenty-two branch-*gaddis* or centres for administering to the religious needs of the Sikhs.

It is evident that this measure of the third Guru must have gone a long way in strengthening the foundations of the Church and in carrying on the propaganda in all parts of the country. We shall see later on how the fifth Guru built on these foundations the beautiful edifice of self-government for the Sikhs in the heart of the Moghul Empire.

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* *Manja* is the masculine of *Manji* meaning *a charpai*, a kind of bed used in India. It was a substitute for the diocesan *gaddi* which the Guru's vicegerents occupied.

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CHAPTER III.

INCREASING POWER AND INFLUENCE OF THE GURUS.

Work of Guru Ram Das (1575—1582).

The Sikhs had now become a community, their numbers had reached thousands, and Guru Amar Das had organised them into twenty-two dioceses and put them under his bishops. The influence of the new Church was now daily on the increase. Among other things the following circumstances materially contributed to the Gurus' growing power and influence :—

1. The foundation of public buildings and towns.

(*a*) Guru Nanak himself had founded the village of Kartarpur where he built the first Dharmsala or Chapel of the Sikhs. He had also started a free dining hall in connection with the Chapel and here he taught his followers during the last few years of his life when he had once more settled down with his family after his life-long travels in India and other countries.

(*b*) Guru Amar Das founded the village of Govindwal* on the Beas in 1546 A. D., under the directions of Guru Angad, and afterwards built a splendid Bawli, or well with steps, which formed, so to say, the first important place of pilgrimage of the Sikhs†

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* The site of the village really belonged to one Govinda Khatri of the Marvah clan, and he had tried to found a village there, but the site was said to be haunted, and the few daring settlers had been driven away by robbers and dacoits. The spiritual power of the Guru laid the ghost and deterred the robbers, and a flourishing village soon grew up.

† It is a fine structure and has altogether 84 steps leading to the surface of the water. Eighty four represents the traditional *Chaurasi* or the series of 84 hundred thousand lives through which the Soul has to pass again and

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(c) The most important achievement of this kind was, however, the foundation of the city of Amritsar, by Guru Ram Das who succeeded to the Gaddi as the fourth Guru. "The site was marked by a small natural pool of water which was supposed to have been a favourite resort of Guru Nanak. On the margin of this pool Guru Ram Das erected himself a hut. Soon after in 1577, he obtained a grant of the site together with 500 *Bighas* of land from the Emperor Akbar, on payment of Rs. 700 *Akbari* to Zemindars of Tung who owned the land. The pool soon acquired a reputation for sanctity, and, the followers of the Guru migrating to the spot, a small town gradually grew up, known at first as Ramdaspur or *Guru Ka Chak*. The pool, improved and formed into a tank, acquired the name of Amritsar or "tank of nectar or immortality," whence the name of the present city.*

The foundation of the city of Amritsar helped the cause of the Gurus in two ways :—

(1) Being situated in the heart of the tract occupied by the sturdy Hindu peasantry, it enabled the Gurus to make converts from their ranks, who ultimately proved the bulwark of their warlike successors, as recruits from the same area are proving a bulwark of the British Empire in India to-day.

(2) "Amritsar has always held the highest position of any town or city in the province as an *entrepot* of trade. The

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again until it attains salvation. The belief among some Sikhs is that bathing and reciting the whole of Japji at each of the steps releases them from the bonds of transmigration. The place is still visited by crowds of people, twice a year, on the Hindu New Year's Day and the death anniversary of Guru Amar Das, when large fairs are held and the poor are fed in thousands.

* Gazetteer of the Amritsar District 1883—84.

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connections of its merchants are not confined to Hindustan, but extend to Bokhara, Kabul and Kashmir, and are of old standing, long anterior to the advent of the British Government in the Punjab. During the time of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Amritsar used to yield, from customs alone, nine lakhs of rupees per annum."

This commercial importance of Amritsar proved a source of vast revenue to the Gurus when the crowds attracted to the town were further swelled by the sanctity it assumed by becoming the Mecca of the Sikhs under Arjun, the fifth Guru.

II.—The second circumstance which considerably contributed to the increasing prestige and influence of the Gurus was to be found in Akbar's friendship. It is important to notice that the Gurus never made any effort to seek the friendship, far less the patronage of the ruling dynasty. Their piety and altruistic principles drew the high as well as the low to them. And while they always welcomed the most lowly and the despised to their church, they were too politic to alienate the high-placed and the powerful by an attitude of arrogance and cynicism by which many a Diogenes of India, even at the present time, sneers at wealth and power as something too mean to deserve any regard at his hands.

Guru Amar Das had numbered many of the hill chieftains among his followers who contributed thousands to the funds of the Church, but the greatest triumph* of the Church in the eyes of the people was scored when the Guru's fame brought the great Akbar to his doors.

* It might be thought that official patronage might have been harmful to the Church which was, one day, destined to play so important a part in pulling down the empire built up by Akbar. The Guru, however, refused all offers of Jaghirs and other kinds of patronage. The mere existence of friendly relations with the Government of the day, without any dependence on its favours, could not do any harm to the Church in its *infantine* state.

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Mirza Jafar Beg, the Governor of Lahore, had been deeply impressed by the piety and noble character of the Guru. When his son, Tahir Beg, joined the forces of Akbar in the siege of Chittour, which proved even in the hands of Akbar a hard nut to crack, and Akbar felt the need of divine intercession,* Tahir spoke in the most glowing terms of the great piety and spiritual powers of Guru Amar Das. Akbar sent a trusted official, one Bhagwan Das Khatri of Sirhind, to beseech the Guru to pray for his success. The Guru was then engaged in the construction of the Bawli and is stated† to have said that Chittour would fall as soon as the wheel‡ of the well would settle in position. Akbar afterwards paid a visit to Guru Amar Das, and a strong friendship grew up between the two great men. After the death of Amar Das, Akbar held his successor in the same respect, and, as time went on, the relations between Ram Das and Akbar grew more and more friendly.

Akbar's friendship with the Gurus operated in two ways for the benefit of the Church. In the first place, it increased the prestige of the Gurus and made their mission more popular with the higher classes of the society. *Yatha Raja tatha Praja*, as is the King, so are the subjects. The truth of this proverb is nowhere better illustrated than in India,

* Akbar was undoubtedly a cultured prince but he does not seem to have escaped some superstitions of the day. Although he did not carry on his head the images of all the saints as Louis XI did on his hat, yet it is certain that in times of difficulty he resorted for help to holy men and holy shrines. His pilgrimage to the *Jwala Mukhi* temple might have been a mere concession to Hindu superstition and an effort at conciliation, but it is certain that his faith in Dervishes and shrines was more than a mere time-serving policy. It is stated on good authority that he several times went on foot on a pilgrimage to the shrines of Nizam-ud-Din Aulia and Muin-ud-Din Chishti. See Ferishta, p. 490.

† Panth Prakash by Gyan Singh Gyani. The Guru probably did not know anything about the history of Chittour.

‡ The wooden wheel on which the wall of the well is built and supported.

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the land of its birth. The early recruits to all new Churches are the cast-off of established organisations. The early Sikhs too were those who had the lowest place in the Hindu Society. The attentions of the Sovereign, however tolerant and broad-minded by nature he may be, are bound to tell in favour of the object of his attention, and the Panth Prakash says that the very fact of Akbar's doing homage to the Guru brought crowds of converts to the fold of Sikhism.

The other way in which Akbar's friendship was turned to account by the Gurus was by taking advantage of it to relieve oppression or popular suffering.

Two notable instances of it are recorded in the Panth Prakash and other books.

(1) When Guru Amar Das was on his way to Hardwar with a large caravan of pilgrims, he was stopped and asked to pay toll which stood at the rate of Re. 1-4-0 per head. The Guru who had a large crowd with him refused to pay. The matter reached the ears of the authorities who decided in favour of the Guru, and the result was that all the pilgrims were allowed to pass without paying anything at all.

(2) The other instance is much more important and though not mentioned in Panth Prakash is given in Latif's *History of the Punjab* (p. 252). Akbar had lain encamped in Lahore for about a year with a large army. As a consequence the prices had considerably risen, and the poor peasantry of the Punjab had greatly suffered from the scarcity of grain. The harvest-time was at hand when Akbar was preparing to march off. The Guru saw that the prices would suddenly fall, and the peasantry, whom the scarcity of the year had driven into debt, would be completely ruined. Therefore when Akbar saw the Guru before marching, and asked him, in the Oriental fashion, if he could be of any service to the Guru, he laid the case of the peasantry before the Emperor

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and asked him to remit the whole land-tax for the year. Akbar readily consented and the impending catastrophe was prevented. This timely intercession immensely increased the popularity of the Guru, and made him an idol with the peasantry of Majha and Malwa, who in course of time provided almost all the fighting strength of Govind, and ultimately transformed Sikhism into a military power.

(3) The third circumstance which added to the prestige and power of the Gurus was a change in the policy of the Gurus as regarded succession. The object of the founder of Sikhism was not to make the office hereditary in the family of any Guru, but the rule was broken in a very curious way. The third Guru had a son, but he was so attached to his daughter, and his son-in-law had proved so dutiful, pious and intelligent, that the Guru rewarded his daughter's love and his son-in-law's devotion and ability by conferring the Gaddi upon the latter in preference to his own son*. It seems, however, that his daughter was not quite satisfied with this favour.

The Guru was very old now, and it seems that his daughter, always ardently devoted to him, was now his only consolation, and looked after his personal comforts, and nursed him with the tenderest care. It is said that one day when the Guru was engaged in his ablutions a leg of the footstool broke down† and crushed the hand of the lady who was

* This young man whose name was Mohan otherwise also fell short of the standard required by the Gurus for their successors in as much as he was too unworldly, and passed days and nights in close seclusion, practising the Yoga and other austerities.

† In the Suraj Prakash it is said that the Guru was going to sit on a *Chouki* or chair to engage in meditation when Bhani, the daughter of the Guru, seeing one of its legs out of order put her arm under the chair. The arm was bruised and when the Guru saw it he was greatly affected. It is also said that the lady did not ask for the Gaddi, but one day it so happened that her infant son Arjun toddled to his grandfather's Gaddi and took his seat

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helping her aged father. A nail pierced her delicate hand which began to bleed profusely. The Guru saw the water turned crimson and asked her what the matter was. "Nothing, Sire," said the lady, as calm as ever, and explained the whole thing to her father. The Guru was overpowered with emotion, and, overcome with gratitude and affection, asked her if there was anything in the world that he could do for her. The fond mother declared that she would be fully satisfied if His Holiness made the office of Guruship hereditary in her own family. The Guru was taken aback at this bold request which he had little anticipated, but the word had been given and there was no turning back.* The boon was granted, and thenceforth the Guruship became hereditary in the family of Ram Das. This changed the whole character of Guruship and "materially contributed to the growth of Sikh power, for henceforward the Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide but also as a worldly lord and a ruling sovereign."† The Guru who was merely a *Satgur* or a true guide at first became *Sachcha Padshah* or the true King.

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there. "Don't be impatient, dear," said the Guru "you will take it from your father." This evidently meant that Ram Das was to succeed after him and then the Gaddi was to go to the latter's son. The version given in the text is traditional and is followed by Cunningham. *History of Sikhs*, p. 47.

* It was in the power of every Guru to dispose of the office in whatever way he liked, so that Ram Das himself, were he so minded, could have made it hereditary in his own line. But this would have been rather against the rules of propriety and opposed to the general custom. Etiquette and policy, therefore, required that the sanction of the grantor should be taken.

† Muhammad Latif. *History of the Punjab* (p. 253.)

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CHAPTER IV.

FOUNDATION OF SIKH THEOCRACY.

Organisation by Guru Arjun (1582—1607).

The Sikhs had now asserted their own individuality, a definite secular turn had been given to their ambition, some slight foundation of organisation had been laid by the establishment of the twenty-two bishoprics under Amar Das, and the public institutions founded by that Guru and his successor, together with the prestige derived from the friendship of the Emperor, had considerably strengthened the foundations of the Sikh Church. Now appeared on the scene a man who was a born poet, a practical philosopher, a powerful organiser and a great statesman. While yielding to none of his predecessors in piety and spiritual excellence, Arjun, who succeeded as fifth Guru, excelled everyone of them in the gifts which are required for the building up of a state. The time for military resistance had not yet come. The tolerance of Akbar and the mild affability of his son had prevented the Moghul despotism from becoming a galling yoke. The need for active resistance, therefore, was not felt so keenly, and the power of Akbar and Jahangir was too great yet to allow a free scope to the ambition of any democratic leader. And even if Arjun had any ambition for political power, he must have perceived that the time was not ripe for its realisation. Consequently he addressed himself with characteristic foresight and patience to the task of organising his followers on peaceful lines.

The steps which Guru Arjun took for the purpose may be described as follows :

(1) The compilation of the Adi Granth. The only book of their sect which the Sikhs had up to that time was a biography of Guru Nanak which the second Guru had compiled from material orally supplied by Bala. As soon as Arjun ascended the Gaddi, he felt the need of placing some sort of

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Bible in the hands of his followers, and turned his attention, first of all, to supply this desideratum. Copies of the first three Gurus' works were procured from Mohan, the son of the third Guru. The works of Guru Ram Das were supplied by Arjun himself.* To these were added Arjun's own works together with selections from the writings of some celebrated Bhaktas, and panegyrics of some poets and minstrels in praise of the Gurus themselves. The compilation occupied many years of Arjun's life, and, when completed, it at once occupied in the regard of the Sikhs a position superior to that of the Vedas, the Bible or the Qoran.†

(2) Simultaneously with the compilation of the Adi Granth, Guru Arjun attempted to give a Mecca to the Sikhs. The town of Amritsar whose foundations had been laid by Ram Das occupies a central position in the Punjab, and stands at the head of the Majha district which forms the stronghold of Sikhism to-day. Arjun realized the importance of having a flourishing city at such a strategic place and set himself to work to raise the little village of Ramdaspur, as the town was then called after its founder, into an important town. Ram Das had built the tank of nectar which was already climbing up into rivalry with the sacred Ganges in the eyes of the Sikhs.‡ Arjun added to the sanctity and splendour of the place by building Harmandir or the Temple of God in the midst of the great tank, and it

* It is most remarkable that except three Gurus, one of whom died in his infancy, all the Gurus were poets and some of them of great excellence. This, of course, implies that the persons to whom the various parts of the Granth are ascribed were really their authors. There is a suggestion in Panth Prakash that Guru Arjun put down some of his own compositions as those of some of the Bhaktas who are classed among the authors. The language of these portions, however, belies this theory.

† For further notice of the book see Appendix, "Sikh Scriptures."

‡ Although the ashes of their dead are still carried to Hardwar by the Sikhs, Amritsar is their chief place of pilgrimage, and it is only to throw the ashes of their dead that the Ganges is now visited by majority of them.

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is this temple which, in its present form as the Golden Temple of Amritsar, forms one of the wonders of India and of the world.

(3) Not only was the importance of the new town increased by Arjun as the chief place of Sikh pilgrimage, but. by transferring his headquarters to the place, he made it the centre of Sikh activity. It became, in fact, the capital and metropolis of the infant commonwealth that the genius of Arjun was gradually and peacefully building up. The Guru, according to the Panth Prakash, is also stated to have induced his leading followers to come and settle in Amritsar. Bhai Sahlo was one of the Commissioners of Settlement and one important quarter of Amritsar is still called after him.

(4) The remission of one whole year's tax by Akbar, at the request of Guru Ram Das, had made the Sikh cause very popular with the peasantry of the Punjab. In the north of the Chenab, however, the peasantry was almost wholly Muhammadan, and between the Chenab and the Ravi it was nearly equally divided between the Hindus and Muhammadans, but the official influence owing to the proximity of Lahore was very great between the two rivers. The Gurus, therefore, turned their attention to the Bari Doab* where the peasantry was almost entirely Hindu as it is to the present day, and perhaps also because that part of the Punjab was most familiar to the Gurus themselves, and being entirely rural† was more free from the direct control and supervision of the Muhammadan authorities. The foundation of the city of Amritsar and its conversion into a base of operations by Guru Arjun had considerably contributed to the propagation of Sikhism among the Jats of Manjha, and now the Guru,

* The country lying between the rivers Ravi and Beas.

† All the important towns in the Manjha tract like Amritsar, Atari, Taran Taran, Jandiala, Ajnala, Ram Das, Majeetha, Raja Sansi were either founded by the Gurus, or by others about or after their time. *See Gazetteer of the Amritsar District.*

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as it were, carried the new faith and new ideas to their very doors by establishing an important centre in the heart of the population. The town of Tarn Taran was founded and a large tank laid out.* "Tarn Taran is the capital of the tract of country known as the Manjha or middle land, which extends from the Ravi to the Beas, the nursery of the chivalry of the Native Army, and the home of a sturdy and strong race of agriculturists."† It was the light that radiated from Amritsar and Tarn Taran that made the peasantry realise their strength, and transformed them from peaceful and toiling husbandmen into fiery soldiers and rulers of the soil which their ancestors had ploughed a few generations before them.

(5) The division of the area permeated by Sikhism into 22 provinces by Amar Das, the law of hereditary succession introduced by Ram Das, the foundation of Amritsar which became the chief centre of Sikh activity and became a sort of Sikh Capital, and the compilation of the Granth, which served as a code of sacred as well as secular law, had introduced into the constitution of the Sikh community some preliminary elements of an infant theocratical state with the Guru as the true King. Arjun now introduced a further and much more important measure of political organisation by placing the revenue system on a sounder and less precarious basis. Hitherto the revenues of the Church depended upon the voluntary contributions of the congregation. The number of the Sikhs had immensely increased and as they were scattered over all parts of the Punjab, from Peshawar to Delhi, the collection of these gifts was very difficult and

* This tank gives its name to the town which means "aiding to swim across," or "Salvation" or "cleansing" water, and the popular belief among the Sikhs is that its water possesses the virtue of curing leprosy, which is responsible for the large colony of lepers there.

† *Gazetteer of the Amritsar District* (1883-84).

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very often they did not find their way into the treasury of the Gurus. Arjun overcame this difficulty in two ways :

(*a*) In the first place the amount of these gifts was fixed with the consent of the donors, so that the Guru could now arrange his budget with much more certainty, as the dues of the Gurus were paid more readily and unfailingly than even the Moghul revenues.

(*b*) Secondly, the difficulty as regards the collection was removed by the appointment of *Masands* or collectors in each of the twenty-two provinces of Sikhism. The duty of each collector* was to realise the Guru's dues and take them to the Guru at Amritsar on the Baisakhi day when the great Durbar was held by the Guru and was attended by all pious and well-to-do Sikhs.

(6) The next step taken by Guru Arjun was calculated to encourage adventure and enterprise among his followers. With this object in view he sent numbers of his followers to Turkistan to purchase horses there and sell them in India.

This step though apparently most ordinary† was productive of manifold good to the rising power of Sikh theocracy.

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* These collectors were at first chosen for their piety, integrity and high position, and were, probably, honorary officers. The office, however, soon became hereditary in the families of the first incumbents, and gradually falling into unworthy hands became an instrument of jobbery and oppression. The complaints against the Masands became so loud at last that Guru Govind Singh had to abolish their office altogether. There are, therefore, now no Sikh Masands, although the system still continues in the sect founded by Banda, and the Masands exist under the name of *Bhais*. (Life of Banda (*Khalsa Diwan*). Masand seems to be a corruption of Masnad, shorter form of *Masnad-i-Ali* or His Excellency, the title of Moghul governors. This is another proof of the rising power of the Sikhs. When the Guru became the true King his Viceroys must of course be their Excellencies.

† In course of conversation with an educated Sikh on the point I hinted at the political motive which the Guru probably had, in starting this horse

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(*a*) First, it dealt another effective blow at the stringency of caste and Hindu superstitions, in breaking down the barrier which prevented the Hindus from crossing the Indus. It also tested and strengthened the faith of the Sikhs, for it required a staunch belief and strong character to come out unscathed through a fanatical and aggressive population like the Muhammadans of the trans-Indus territories.

(*b*) Horse trade, being a lucrative trade in those days, enriched the Sikh traders and brought large contributions to the coffers of the Church*

(*c*) It laid the foundation of the future armies of the Khalsa, by developing a taste for riding among the Sikhs, who gradually became the finest horsemen in Northern India†

(7) The character of Guruship had already been changed by the adoption of the rule of hereditary succession. Now that the number of followers multiplied, the resources increased, and the Church was developed into a sort of State,

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trade. He felt surprised, for, like many Sikhs, he had never thought Guru Arjun had any political motives at all in anything that he undertook and accomplished. Considering, however, that Arjun was the first great organiser among the Sikh Gurus and was, in fact, the founder of Sikh Theocracy, it would be too poor an estimate of his intelligence to suppose that he never cherished a belief in the great possibilities of the little State he had built up. As regards the horse trade beyond the Indus, the very fact that nearly all historians have mentioned it would show its importance and that the Guru had an aim in fostering it.

* The *Daswandh* or the one-tenth of the profit, which was set apart by every pious Sikh for the communal funds, would of itself be a valuable addition, but it is likely that the trade, or at any rate a considerable part of it, was carried on with public funds of the community, and the major portion of the profits therefore went to the funds of the Church.

† The Sikh forces were entirely composed of cavalry before Ranjit Singh's time.

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Guru Arjun changed his mode of living so as to suit the present condition of the community over which he presided.* All his predecessors, from Nanak to Ram Das, had lived in great simplicity and even asceticism but Arjun completely changed the nature of the Guru's office. Though himself a man of simple habits and great humility† his darbar became a place of splendour and magnificence, and the palatial buildings and tents and horses and treasure gave it the look of a princely Court.

As a matter of fact the Sikhs had made a great advance under the pontificate of Guru Arjun. A State, peaceful and unobtrusive, had been slowly evolved, and with the Guru at its head as *Sachcha Padshah*, the Sikhs "had already become accustomed to a form of self-government within the empire."‡ Their power and prestige had increased, and they were fast becoming a factor in the political life of the province. Reference may here be made to two circumstances which furnish an index to the position to which the Sikhs had attained under the *regime* of Arjun.

The first is this. When Prince Khusro, who had rebelled against his father, fled to the Punjab,§ and took refuge there, he resorted to the Guru for help. The Guru had not

* The author of the Panth Prakash relates a popular tradition about the wealthiness of Guru Arjun. It is said that the power and pelf of the world kept, as it were, at a distance of twelve miles from Nanak and six miles from Angad. It knocked at the door of Amar Das and fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, while in Arjun's time it got admission into the house. The fable very beautifully describes the gradual growth of the social and political power of the Sikhs.

† Arjun had a very long beard. When he went to see Sri Chand, Nanak's ascetic son who was still alive and nearly 100 years old, he was asked by the old ascetic why he had grown such a long beard. "To wipe the feet of saints like your Holiness," replied Arjun. "It was this humility," rejoined Sri Chand, "that won you the throne of Guru Nanak."

‡ Muhsin Fani, *Dabistan*.

§ In 1606, A. D.

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yet initiated a policy of military organisation, but he advanced a considerable sum of money to the Prince, and lent him his moral support by praying for his success in the civil war. The other fact showing the Guru's political importance is that his son was chosen for the hand of the beautiful daughter of Chandu Shah, the Diwan of Lahore.

Both of these circumstances are extremely important in the history of the Sikhs, as the complications arising out of them directly and indirectly contributed to the growth of Sikh power and led to the first step in their military organisation.

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CHAPTER V.

PERSECUTION DRIVES THE SIKHS TO ARMS.

The next great impetus which stimulated the growth of the Sikh power and formed the immediate cause of its transition into a political organisation was that derived from the persecution to which they were systematically subjected by the Moslem Government of the day. The history of these persecutions is the history of all the measures which a despotic Government is compelled to adopt to check the growth of a dangerous organisation. Threats, prosecution, fine, imprisonment, deportation, torture, execution, outlawry, and massacre, all these weapons were employed, one by one, against the builders of the nation which was destined to wrest the sceptre of the Punjab from the hands of the Moghuls. The followers of the Gurus faced every hardship with fortitude and courage, and emerged from every ordeal, purer and stronger, with redoubled zeal and deeper vows of implacable hatred against the rulers. They acted on the faith that "Blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," and proved its truth by their ultimate success. Not only did they succeed in founding a Church which claims the allegiance of the majority of Hindus in the Punjab, but established a Kingdom which gave a magnificent sunset to the stormy day of Hindu glory.

First Prosecution.

The chapter of these persecutions opened in the lifetime of Arjun himself. He was not only to be the first great organiser of the Sikh nation, but was also destined to be the first whose brows were adorned by the aureole of martyrdom. Organisation of any kind is in itself a menace to despotism, and the compactness which the rising community of the Sikhs was assuming under Arjun would of itself have

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brought the royal wrath upon the Guru's head. But the catastrophe was precipitated by two circumstances, one of which, at least, was purely accidental. The Guru had made the mistake of openly espousing the cause of the rebel Prince Khusro, and as stated in the previous chapter, had helped him by placing a sum of money at his disposal. The other was the rejection* by the Guru of the offer made by Chandoo Shah, Diwan of Lahore, of his daughter's hand to the son of the Guru. This was an insult which the great minister of Lahore could not swallow. He repeated the offer again and again, but it was again and again rejected.† The Diwan was exasperated and resolved to punish the Guru for his insolence. With this object in view he reported to the Emperor that the Adi Granth compiled by Guru Arjun was seditious in tone and full of malicious attacks on Islam as well as Hinduism. An examination of the contents, however, fully satisfied the tolerant Akbar, as to its devotional and inoffensive character.

Chandu, much disappointed and chagrined by this rebuff, lay in wait for a better opportunity to plot the ruin of the Guru, and he found an excellent one in the Guru's complicity with the rebel prince. Through his machinations, the Guru

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* The Purohit of the Diwan who had been entrusted with the duty of finding a husband for the minister's daughter was tempted by the power and prosperity of Arjun no less than by the personal merits of his son, and had consequently selected the Guru's son for the hand of the Diwan's daughter. Great as Arjun was, his income consisted of tithes, and Chandu made on this ground an uncomplimentary remark about the Guru, in which he compared himself to the highest storey of a palace and the Guru to the gutter. The Guru was indignant to hear of this remark, and though his obstinacy cost him his life, his self-respect did not allow him to accept the offer.

† The offer was made so repeatedly because, under a mistaken notion of honour, a noble Khatri could not brook to marry his daughter to anyone else, after a bridegroom for her had been once selected.

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was arraigned of treason,* and fined two hundred thousand rupees. The faithful Sikhs at once started a subscription list to raise funds for the payment of the fine, but the Guru forbade them, and preferred to remain in confinement. Chandu bailed him out and took him in his own custody and repeated the same old offer again. The Guru remained obdurate, however, and was put to death in 1606 A. D. after the most barbarous tortures.†

Deportation.

The next victim of imperial wrath was Arjun's own son Hargovind. He was an excellent sportsman and by his charming manners and manly bearing had won the regard of Jahangir who took him to Kashmir in 1620. He, however, soon incurred the Emperor's displeasure, first, by his over-independent character, secondly, by breaking the forest laws to which he was led by his great passion for hunting, and thirdly, by appropriating‡ to his own use the money granted by the Emperor for his troops. Besides this the fine imposed upon his father had never been paid. The result

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* The charges also included the allegations that the Guru called himself "true king," and had a large organisation under him with the intention of making war upon the Emperor.

† According to the Panth Prakash the Guru was made to sit in boiling water, then had his body burnt with hot sand and finally ordered to be sewn up in raw cow-hide. Convinced that his end was approaching, the Guru begged to be permitted to have a bath after which he promised to consider Chandu's offer. He was escorted to the river then flowing under the walls of the Lahore fort. He plunged into the water and never came out. According to Munshi Sohan Lal, the Guru was thrown into the river by Chandu's orders and was carried away by the current. According to Latif the Guru died of apoplexy during his captivity. Panth Prakash represents the traditional and most popular version.

‡ The emperor could not understand the nature of the Guru's following. His troops were mostly volunteers and fought, not for pay, but out of devotion and obedience.

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was that Hargovind was arrested and deported* to Gwalior, where he was confined on short rations in the fort for many years until he was released at the intercession of Mianmeer, the famous Muhammadan Saint, after whom the town of the Lahore Cantonment is named.

Execution.

Prosecution, fine, imprisonment, and deportation had been tried and had proved successful for some time. But the ninth Guru seems to have recouped the lost power, and the Khalsa was again ripe for persecution. Tegh Bahadur was the acknowledged head of the Punjab Hindus from 1664 to 1675 A. D. His personal influence and popular propaganda formed a great obstacle in the way of Aurangzeb's proselytising campaign. He was consequently summoned to Delhi in 1675 on a charge of treason and two alternatives were placed before him. He should either embrace Islam or die. He preferred death to apostasy and was beheaded by Aurangzeb's orders. His body was exposed in the streets of Delhi where it lay for many days until it was removed by some brave low-class followers of the martyred Guru and carried to his son who performed the funeral rites.†

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* Panth Prakash gives another version also. It is stated that afraid of the rising power of Hargovind, Chandu Shah instigated the Emperor to send Hargovind to the fort of Gwalior to offer prayers for His Majesty to avert an impending calamity which astrologers, bribed by Chandu, had predicted for the Emperor.

Sikhan de Raj di Vithya as well as *Khargdhari Hulas* by Jodh Singh follows the latter version. They also put Chandu's execution after the Guru's release. The Guru's captivity according to these authorities extended over one year only, but according to Dabistan of Muhsin Fani it lasted for twelve years. Trumpp follows Dabistan and, I think, is correct.

† According to Panth Prakash the head was taken by one Jiwan, a scavenger, to Guru Govind Singh, while the body was removed at night by Lakhi, a Sikh of the Labana caste and cremated secretly by him in his own house. The place of execution is marked by a temple name Sees Ganj and the place of cremation by a Cenotaph called Rikab Ganj after the village

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Slaughter of the Innocents.

The edge of Moghul vengeance grew sharper every day with the increase of the power of the Khalsa. During the siege of Anandpur where Guru Govind Singh was shut up by the Moghul army, the Guru's mother with her two little grandsons* escaped from the fortress at the request of the Guru himself. They had not gone far when they fell into the hands of the Governor of Sirhind† The slaughter of women and minors, even if infidels, is not allowed in the Qoran. Their lives were therefore spared and the children often attended the court of the Governor as State prisoners. One day as the boys were sitting in the Court, the Governor was much pleased with their graceful appearance and seemingly good looks, and said to them with kindness: "Boys! what would you do if we were to give you your liberty?" The boys answered: "We would collect our Sikhs, supply them with implements of war, fight with you and put you to death." The Governor said: "If you were defeated in the fight, what would you do then?" "We will collect our armies again," replied the boys, "and will either kill you or be killed." The Governor was enraged at their intrepid and haughty reply, and ordered his Diwan to remove the boys from his presence, and to despatch them at his house. The boys were accordingly put to death by Kuljas, the Diwan. Some‡ say he put the children under the foundation of a

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of the faithful Labana. According to another version, the head was burnt at Delhi while the body was removed by two sweepers, father and son. In order to avoid suspicion and pursuit, the father insisted on being beheaded and his body being substituted in place of the Guru's which was accordingly done. See Munshi Sohan Lal, f. 72.

* The names of the boys were Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh.

† Foujdar Khan is the name given by some, but it is really mistaking the title for the name. The name of the then Foujdar (Governor) of Sirhind was Wazir Khan (See Malcolm and Cunningham).

‡ Panth Prakash, for instance.

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wall and closed the place up and thus buried them alive. The Guru's mother died of grief at the sad end of her grand-children*.

Massacre.

Horrible as the treatment accorded by the Governor of Sirhind to the infant sons of Govind was, it was to be succeeded by horrors of much more appalling dimensions. Guru Govind was dead, and his mantle had fallen on the shoulders of Banda. This leader had taken full vengeance upon the Governor and people of Sirhind for the atrocious cruelty with which they had dealt with the innocent children of the Guru. He had slaughtered hundreds of Muhammadans, burnt down scores of villages and for a moment seemed to have shaken the very foundations of the Moghul Empire.† He was at last defeated in 1716 and taken to Delhi in an iron cage with 740 of his followers, preceded by a procession of Sikhs' heads borne on pikes.‡ "A hundred Sikhs were put to death daily, contending among themselves for priority of martyrdom, and on the eighth day Banda himself was arraigned before his judges. He was made to kill his own son which he did silent and unmoved.

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* The account given above is according to Syed Muhammad Latif. *History of the Punjab*, page 265.

N.B.—In Panth Prakash and Kanahya Lal's History of Punjab it is stated that the Guru's mother and sons were betrayed by an old servant, named Ganga Ram, according to P. P. Malcolm makes no mention of this betrayal, but simply says: "His enemies entered the fortress which the Guru had left, the moment he fled, and many prisoners were taken, among whom were his mother and his two children, who were carried to Foujdar (Wazir) Khan, the Governor of Sirhind, by whose orders they were inhumanly massacred." Malcolm's *Sketch* (page 40). A footnote on the same page is very significant, "Muhammadan writers" it says, "blame Wazir Khan for this unnecessary and unpolitic act of barbarity."

† It is said that the successes of Banda had led Bahadur Shah to seriously think of shifting his capital from Delhi to Lahore.

‡ *Khafi Khan.*

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"His own flesh was torn with a red hot pincer and amid these torments he expired."*

Outlawry.

After the defeat of Banda, the power of the Sikhs was almost shattered to pieces and it seemed that the race was going to be extinct.

Farrukh Siyar had ascended the throne of Delhi in 1714 A. D. He was a powerful ruler, and as soon as he had cleared the Court of rivals and hostile factions, he turned his attention to set things right in the Punjab. Banda had fallen but he knew the elasticity of the Sikh character and the readiness with which the followers of Gobind mustered together as soon as they could find a leader. He, therefore, issued a proclamation which declared all Sikhs to be outlaws, and laid down that—

(1) No Hindu in the Punjab was allowed to grow long hair or a beard, any one refusing to shave being liable to instant death.†

(2) A scale of prizes was fixed for co-operation in the extermination of the Sikhs. Anyone giving information leading to the arrest of a Sikh was eligible for a reward of Rs. 5, a helper in the arrest was given Rs. 10, one bringing a Sikh to the Police Thana received Rs. 15, and anyone who brought the head of a Sikh was awarded Rs. 25. For greater services jaghirs were bestowed upon deserving persons.

(3) It was made criminal for anyone to entertain a Sikh, give him refuge under his roof or help him in any way.‡

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* Cunningham, History of the Sikhs. Also see the British Envoy's letter (Mar. 10, 1716) from Delhi. Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, page 180.

† Malcolm: *A Sketch of the Sikhs*, page 53. See also Forster, *Journey from Bengal*, &c., page 265.

‡ Panth Prakash. See also Malcolm: *Sketch* (page 53).

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The temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar was desecrated and a Muhammadan Taluqdar * of Lahore held his nautch parties within its sacred precincts. Moreover a moving column of several thousand soldiers was appointed to hunt out the Sikhs wherever they could be found.† The result of these measures was that numbers of less enthusiastic Sikhs shaved their beards, and joined the Hindus again, while the more faithful retired to the jungles and hills or, bidding for the nonce good-bye to their native land, sought refuge in the deserts of Bikanir and Rajputana, some taking service with the Hindu chiefs of those provinces. This was the hardest time, the bitterest ordeal, for the followers of Govind. Driven from their hearths and homes, they wandered they knew not whither, without a shelter, without any food or clothing. Their wives and children were seized and tortured to death. The tradition is still fresh in the Punjab how a mother then answered the question, "How many sons have you got?" "I had four," the mother said "but one has become a Sikh." To be a Sikh was to court certain death. "An astonishing number of that sect must have fallen, in the last two or three years of the contest with the imperial armies, as the irritated Muhammadans gave them no quarter."‡

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* *Massa Ranghar* who was assassinated by Mahtab Singh of Mirankot and Sukha Singh, Carpenter of Mari Kambo, in 1740 A. D.

† The strength of this column sometimes reached ten thousand. It was appointed in Muhammad Shah's time by Zakria Khan, the newly appointed Governor, by the advice of his Hindu Diwan named Lakhpat Rai. (Guru Panth Prakash).

‡ Malcolm : *Sketch* (page 53.)

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CHAPTER VI.

SOME NOTABLE EXECUTIONS.

Thousands of faithful Sikhs must have fallen during the maelstrom, but two or three executions, which owing to the peculiar and high position and great piety of the victims aroused the greatest indignation, deserve a particular mention.

Martyrdom of Mani Singh.

The foremost of these victims was Mani Singh. He was an old Sikh who had sat at the feet of Guru Govind Singh himself. He had been sent to Amritsar by the widow of the Guru to settle the disputes raging between the followers of Banda and the *Tatwa Khalsa* or the original followers of Govind. He was a well-read man and the Adi Granth owes its present form to his intelligence and skill. Being of a retiring and peaceful disposition he had settled down in Amritsar and while the storm of persecution was raging all around, he passed his days in Amritsar as a pious Hindu whom no one suspected or reported as having anything to do with the rebellious Sikhs. He looked after the temple and in 1738 A.D., two years before its desecration,* Mani Singh who was held in great esteem by the *Hakim* of Amritsar applied for leave to hold the Diwali fair in Amritsar. The matter, being rather serious, was referred to the Governor of Lahore. Permission was ultimately granted on the condition that Mani Singh should pay Rs. 5,000 into the State treasury after the fair.† Mani Singh issued invitations to

* By Massa Ranghar who turned the temple into his sitting room and defiled it by smoking and spitting in it and inviting nautch girls to dance there.

† Mani Singh's object might have been to bring about peaceful relations between the Sikhs and the Government and to give them an opportunity of settling their future policy by bringing them together. The object of the Governor in granting permission was probably to allow the Sikhs to assemble

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the whole body of Khalsa and the Sikhs started towards Amritsar in large numbers. The Governor of Lahore, however, sent a detachment of troops to Amritsar under the pretext of keeping order during the coming fair. The Sikhs were frightened by this suspicious move of the authorities and turned back. The fair was never held and the sum of Rs. 5,000 which Mani Singh expected to pay out of the offerings that the Sikhs would have made at the temple was not paid. Mani Singh was arrested and taken to Lahore. He was asked to pay the money or embrace Islam. The latter proposal was rejected with scorn. The admirers of Mani Singh raised the 5,000 rupees but it was too late. The sentence of death had already been passed and Mani Singh was consequently put to death, his body being slowly cut to pieces at each joint.*

Martyrdom of Taru Singh (1750 A. D.)

The next important victim of Moslem bigotry was Taru Singh. He was a Jat by caste and a native of Poola in the Manjha tract. He was a young man of twenty-five, and lived with his sister and widowed mother, earning his livelihood by tilling the bit of land his father had left him. He had great reputation for piety and was a devoted follower of the Khalsa. He was always heard repeating the verses of the Granth whether engaged in ploughing his field or

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at one point and then to strike a crushing blow at them unawares, as is clearly shown by subsequent proceedings.

* It is stated by the author of Panth Prakash that Mani Singh altered the arrangement of the Adi Granth, re-arranging the works of the various authors according to the Rags. The Sikhs who looked upon the book as a living personality resented Mani Singh's action as mutilation of their Guru and declared that his own body would be cut into pieces just as he had cut the body of the sacred book into pieces! It is of course needless to say whether the curse led to the punishment or the punishment led to the invention of the curse.

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watering his crop. His mother and sister also were models of virtue and piety and made their living by grinding their neighbours' corn. The family lived a simple and austere life and spent all their little savings in the help of their brethren whom the iron hand of the Nazim of Lahore had driven into the forests and deserts. This was clearly treason and it was not long before Taru Singh was betrayed by one Har Bhagat Niranjani of Jandiala.* The offender was arrested and taken to Lahore. On the way some Sikhs offered to rescue him but Taru Singh did not like to expose his friends to the vengeance of the authorities, and preferred to go to Lahore. He was put on the wheel, and when his limbs were crushed and he was half dead the alternative of Islam was placed before him and promises of material advancement were held forth. "But all this did not avail to him as a grain of barley."† When asked to cut his hair he simply said "The hair, the scalp and the skull have a mutual connection; the head of man is linked with life, and I am prepared to lay down my life with cheerfulness."‡ His hair was then hewn off from his skull and he was put to death after severe tortures. About the same time a large number of other Sikhs were brought to Lahore and slain outside the Delhi Gate, and the scene of their execution is now known as Shahid Ganj or place of martyrs.

The Boy Martyr, Hakikat Rai.

The execution of Mani Singh, Taru Singh and other holy men stirred the Sikh nation to its very depths, but the Moghul Government had in these cases at least the semblance

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* This must have been a follower of Akil Das, Mahant or Abbot of Jandiala who sided with the Abdali King, and was ultimately destroyed by the Sikhs.

† Ibrat Nama—Persian Ms. India Office, No. 504, Ethe's Catalogue, p.199.

‡ Cunningham—*History of the Sikhs*, p. 92.

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of law on their side and these holy men had fallen under charges of high treason.

The execution of Hakikat Rai, however, was due to sheer bigotry and high-handedness, and the result of it was far more disastrous for the Government than any produced by previous persecution. So far the Hindus, though greatly oppressed, were not so hostile to the Moghuls as the Sikhs were, but the slaughter of this innocent little boy roused their bitterest hatred and goaded them to make common cause with the Sikhs. The martyrdom of Hakikat won him the title of Dharmi, or Hakikat the Faithful, by which name he is still remembered and his memory still cherished.

As none of the English historians has made any mention of the incident which exerted such a powerful influence on the Hindus of the eighteenth century in the Punjab, and still appeals to them with a great force, it may not be quite out of place to give here a brief account of the event.

Hakikat Rai was probably born in 1719 A. D. * at Sialkot, being the only child of Bagh Mal, a Khatri of the *Puri* caste and a clerk in the office of the *Hakim* of Sialkot. Hakikat was married at an early age to the daughter of a Sikh Khatri of Wadala, a well-known village in the district

* The date of Hakikat's birth as given by Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla, author of *Shahid Ganj* or Hindu Martyrology, is 1745 A.D. and that given in Shamshir-i-Khalsa is 1734. I think both are wrong. Agra who wrote a *Var* of Hakikat Rai gives 1791 Samvat as the date of Hakikat's martyrdom. As Agra wrote this book in 1847 Samvat, *i. e.*, about 56 years after the tragedy he might have been an eye witness, or at least, must have based his narrative on accounts given by eye-witnesses of the incident. Munshi Sohan Lal, the famous Court Historian of Ranjit Singh, puts the occurrence in the time of Khan Bahadur who was Governor of Lahore from 1726 to 1743 A. D. Kali Das, the well-known poet of Gujranwala, also assigns the age of Muhammad Shah and Khan Bahadur to the martyrdom of Hakikat.

Agra also gives the morning of the twelfth of the dark half moon of Kartik as the time of Hakikat's birth, though he does not give the year.

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of Sialkot, and it may be presumed that he had heard something of the glorious sacrifices and martyrdom of the Gurus and their followers. He was sent to school at the age of seven and began to learn Persian with a *Mulla* or a Muhammadan priest. It was in the year 1734 when Hakikat was barely fifteen that one day a quarrel arose among the boys in the absence of the Mulla. The Muhammadan boys took the aggressive part and abused the goddess of the Hindus. Hakikat seems to have been a devout follower of the goddess, and, touched to the quick, he retaliated by abusing Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. This was an offence which no Hindu had dared to commit and which cost poor Hakikat his life. When the Mulla returned, the whole story was told him by the Moslem boys. The Mulla flew into rage, caught hold of Hakikat and asked him how he dared to abuse the Prophet's daughter. Hakikat admitted his guilt, but declared that he had not been aggressive, and had lost his temper by the Moslem boys' heaping abuse on her who was adored by all holy men and to whose holy shrine Akbar had walked barefooted to pay his homage.* This intrepid reply exasperated the Mulla and he dragged the boy to the court of the Qazi who took him at once to the Hakim. The news of Hakikat's arrest fell like a thunderbolt upon his parents. They hastened to the Hakim and on their knees begged him to pardon their son as he was only a child and had uttered the sinful words in a boyish quarrel. The Mulla and the Qazi seemed to have decided upon putting the boy to death unless he embraced Islam, and to preclude all possibility of mercy being shown to the culprit they had already worked up a sensation in the Moslem population of the town. Amir Beg, the Hakim, seems to have been a more sensible

* The statement seems to be true and the incident is still celebrated in popular verse which says "O goddess, Akbar came barefooted and offered a golden canopy at thy shrine."

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and less bigoted man. He realised the gravity of the situation and did not like to take the responsibility on his own shoulders. He called a meeting of the Ulemas and referred the matter to them. The verdict of the Ulemas was that Hakikat should either embrace Islam or he should expiate the sin by his death. Amir Beg did not approve of this decision and pointed out many serious political results that would follow such high-handedness. The Ulemas appealed to his Islamic piety and urged him to lay aside all mundane considerations in punishing the offender who had dared insult Islam. Amir Beg was on the horns of a dilemma. Justice and commonsense revolted against such cruelty. The Ulemas and the crowd of Moslem fanatics that had by this time surrounded his court would not listen to justice and commonsense. The only way out of the difficulty seemed to lie in sending up the case to the higher authorities. Hakikat with the Qazi and the Mulla was sent up to the Nazim of Lahore. All along the way from Sialkot to Lahore crowds came out from every village to meet the unfortunate boy and plead for him. Many fair-minded Muhammadans* also implored the Qazi to pardon the little offender but all was in vain. The decision of the Nazim of Lahore was in accordance with the verdict of the Ulemas. The Governor was, however, moved to pity at the tender years and attractive features of Hakikat, and exhorted him to embrace Islam and promised him high rank and all worldly things if he renounced his faith. Hakikat was firm and was prepared to die. Kauran, his aged mother, ran to him and entreated him to embrace Islam and save his life. "Shall I not die again mother?" was Hakikat's reply. "If die I must in every case why die a renegade?" The bereavement of the parents, the widowhood of his girl-wife, the sorrow of all friends and

* Notable among these was Dargahi, the Mukaddim of Shahdara, near Lahore.

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relations were difficult to bear, but the abandonment of his *dharma* seemed to Hakikat much more difficult. The order was passed and the noble boy was at once beheaded in the centre of the city of Lahore amidst the sighs and curses of the whole Hindu population. His funeral was attended by the high and the low and his ashes were buried four miles east of Lahore, where a cenotaph still exists and a fair is annually held on the day of Basant Panchami the day of his martyrdom.*

* The history of Hakikat's martyrdom has gained great popularity with the Punjab Hindus within the last few years. The greatest work of Kali Das, the greatest living poet of the Punjab, is devoted to this subject. The little drama of L. Mulk Raj Bhalla has also played a great part in reviving the story of the boy martyr.

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CHAPTER VII.

ARMED RESISTANCE BEGINS.

Hargovind's Campaigns (1607—1644).

The prosecution, fine, torture and death which Arjun, the fifth Guru, suffered were signal blasts, as it were, to rally the physical forces of the Sikh Theocracy. Har Govind, his son, who succeeded him at the age of eleven began by girding up two swords, "one to revenge my father, the other to destroy the miracles of Muhammad." * To the symbols of asceticism † were added the paraphernalia of royalty, the sword, the umbrella, the crest and the hawk. The presents which were now pouring in from all sides took the form of horses, arms and other equipment of war. The favourite occupation of the Guru was no longer sitting down in meditation and writing hymns and prayers.‡ Hargovind began to devote most of his time to wrestling, riding, tent-pegging and hunting the tiger and the boar. With the change of aims the occupation changed and with the change in the occupation came a change in tastes and even diet. Animal food was not only sanctioned but was encouraged.§ Physical strength and athletic constitution found as much favour with the warlike pontiff as the highest piety or the deepest learning. "The general disposition of the martial apostle led him to rejoice in the companionship of a camp, in the danger of war and in the excitement of the chase, nor is it improbable that the policy of a temporal chief mingled with the feelings of an injured son and with the duties of a religious guide, so as to shape his acts to the ends of his ambition although that may not

* Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs.

† These were a cap; a rosary and a *sehli* or a necklace made of wool.

‡ The sixth Guru has not left a single line of his composition.

§ Dabistan.

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have aimed at more than a partial independence under the mild supremacy of the son of Akbar."*

The circumstances which led Hargovind to make military preparations and offer armed resistance to the government may be summed up as follows :—

1. To revenge his father's death.

2. "To destroy the miracles of Muhammad," which meant the destruction of Islam and of the Moslem Government.†

3. Natural disposition for adventure and romance as suggested by Cunningham.

4. A latent desire of seeing his people freed from the yoke of tyranny and oppression.

5. His own dangerous situation, as his cousin Dhir Mal whose father had been deprived of the Gaddi by the accession of Arjun was always plotting his ruin.

6. Certain subsidiary causes :—(*a*) his own incarceration, (*b*) his quarrel with his foster-brother Payenda Khan, (*c*) alleged abduction of a Qazi's daughter, (*d*) the friction with the Emperor over a number of horses.

Goaded on by these circumstances the Guru at once addressed himself to the task of organising a little army of his own. The work was carried on as follows :—

(1) He exhorted all his followers to bear arms and be always prepared to fight the enemies of their religion. These formed his reserves and came

* Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, p. 53.

† This did not stand in the way of the Gurus' personal friendship with Muhammadans. Hargovind was on the most friendly terms with some of the leading Muhammadans of the time, Muhsin Fani, the author of the Dabistan, being one of them. He had in fact been brought up by a Muhammadan nurse. Dara was the greatest friend of Har Rai and the Tenth Guru was educated and his very life saved by Muhammadans.

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to fight under his flag whenever he summoned them.

(2) He enlisted all malcontents and fugitives among his followers* and took many dacoits and free-booters into his service.

(3) He had a stable of 800 horses, and 300 horsemen and sixty artillery men formed his bodyguard.†

For some time the Guru went on unmolested, and had in fact succeeded in winning the favour of Jahangir. Through the favour of the Emperor he had succeeded in taking his vengeance upon Chandu Shah, the Diwan of Lahore, who had been instrumental in the torture and death of his father‡ He had even taken service under Jahangir and was sent to reduce the rebellious chief, Tara Chand of Nalagarh§ whom he at once subdued and brought to the Emperor. He was since then appointed a sort of supervisor over the Punjab officials and was placed in command of 700 horse, 1,000 foot and seven guns. The Guru retained this command until he incurred the Emperor's displeasure when he was dismissed and deported to the fort of Gwalior.

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* Cunningham. The Author of the Panth Prakash relates a tradition that Ram Pratap, the fugitive Raja of Jeysselmeer, had taken refuge with Hargovind and was so attached to him that when the Guru died, the Raja and his son Ram Singh jumped into the flames and burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of Hargovind. The author of Panth Prakash also mentions the names of Yar Khan and Khawja Sarai, dismissed Commanders of the Moghul army who took refuge with the Guru.

† Dabistan, Cunningham wrongly translates *topchi* an artillery man, into a match-lock man.

‡ Dr. E. Trumpp says but wrongly I think that Hargovind had taken the law in his own hand and had succeeded in killing the Diwan without Royal help or permission. Chandu was dragged through the streets by a rope tied to his legs and after being subjected to great torture was put to death.

§ Panth Prakash and Dabistan.

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Even after his release he passed many years in peace until he was driven to take up arms in self-defence.

Hargovind's military career extended over several years, during which he fought three battles, all of which he won.

1. The first was provoked by the governor of Lahore. A faithful Sikh was bringing some horses of exceptional breed from Turkistan for the Guru. The Nazim of Lahore took hold of the horses and kept them for the Emperor. The Emperor bestowed one upon Rustam Khan, the Qazi of Lahore. The Guru succeeded in recovering this one, and to flout the Qazi carried away his favourite concubine* as well. He was, consequently attacked by Mukhlis Khan, the Naib Nazim of Lahore, and the two sons of the Qazi with a force of 7,000 strong. The Guru met them at the head of 5,000 troops† A battle was fought at Wadali, four miles from Amritsar, in which the Moghuls were completely routed.‡

Two weeks after this defeat the Moghul army, 15,000 strong, again attacked the Guru at Amritsar. The Guru offered some resistance but thinking discretion to be the better part of valour withdrew to his hill retreats. One year after this when he was resting at Sri Hargovindpore, a town founded by himself, he was suddenly attacked by the troops of the Nazim of Jullundhur under Ali Bakhsh and Imam Bakhsh. The Guru opposed his 2,000 Sikhs to the 5,000

* The Sikh accounts say she was the Qazi's daughter. Muhammadans, according to Cunningham, assert that she was a concubine, and the Hindu name of the girl, *Kaulan* (lotus) would confirm the Moslem view. The girl might have been a Hindu and might have been forcibly abducted by the Qazi, by no means an uncommon occurrence in those days. Thinking the Guru to be a champion of the Hindus she might have escaped and taken refuge with him. He treated her kindly and immortalised her by building a temple in Amritsar which is still called *Kaul Sar* after her.

† According to the author of Panth Prakash 3,000 only.

‡ The date of this battle according to Panth Prakash was the 13th of Chet, Samvat 1685 Vik. (1628 A. D.)

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Moghuls and won a complete victory. The Nazim himself arrived soon after to retrieve the lost battle and was himself slain.

2. The second important battle which is also described by Cunningham was provoked by the Guru himself. The Guru had never forgotten the insult offered him by the Nazim of Lahore, by taking forcible possession of the horses that one of his followers had brought for him from Turkistan. He now sent to Lahore one of his trusted followers,* who had been a daring free-booter before joining the Guru's army, to try and bring back the two horses.

Bidhi Chand disguised himself as a grass-cutter and was gradually appointed as a groom in the royal stables. A branch of the Ravi then flowed just under the fort washing its walls. One dark night Bidhi Chand mounted one of the horses and jumped into the river below and brought it safely to the Guru. The Guru was delighted but the sight of the horse made him pine for its companion and Bidhi Chand was sent to try his luck again. This time he disguised himself as a Khoji or scout and pretended to be able to trace out any kind of thief. He was soon taken into the fort and told to try his art in tracing out the thief who had stolen the Royal horse. He prayed to be left alone on the spot where the theft had been committed, and watching his opportunity he got on the back of the other horse and jumped with it again into the river.

He however kept his word, and, just before jumping over, shouted at the top of his voice and told them who the thief was and where the stolen horse had gone. At the same time he hurled a defiance at them and challenged them to recover, if they could, both the horses from the true King, Guru Hargovind, his master.

* According to Gur Bilas and Panth Prakash it was Bidhi Chand, a Jat of Chhina tribe and native of Sur Sang,

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The result was a powerful expedition sent against the Guru. Abdullah Khan, Salim Khan and Bahlol Khan attacked the Guru with 2,200 troops. A battle was fought at the village of *Lahra* in Malwa and the Guru was again victorious.*

3. After this battle the Guru thought it expedient to retire from the field for some time. Accordingly he retreated to the deserts of Bathinda, spreading his doctrines there and making new converts. After about two years he paid a flying visit to Amritsar, which city, owing to his hostile relations with the Government, he had practically abandoned, and retired to Kartarpur, near Jullundhur. Hostilities in the meantime broke out between the Guru and his foster-brother Payanda Khan. The latter was a good athlete and an excellent soldier. He had led the Guru's troops in all the battles, and had naturally begun to feel that he had been the cause of the Guru's repeated victories.† A quarrel arose between the two over a trifling matter.‡ The insolence of the Guru was rankling in the Emperor's heart, and the son of Chandu and his own cousin, the son of Prithi, had always been watching to take revenge on him. They made common cause with Payanda, flattered him for his strength, courage and generalship, and all together went to the Emperor offering to destroy the Guru this time if they were given

* The date according to Panth Prakash was Pos, Samvat 1688, or December 1631 A. D. No English historian has given the date of this battle.

† The Guru always treated him with the greatest kindness. He had celebrated his marriage at his own expense and had built for him an elegant house and even an inn and a mosque in Sri Hargovindpore to please him.

‡ According to Cunningham it was the detention by Payanda of a favourite hawk of the Guru's. According to Panth Prakash and Gur Bilas it was due to the meanness of Payanda's son-in-law who had stolen among other things a beautiful sword and a pearl necklace belonging to the Guru's son. Munshi Sohan Lal says Payanda incurred the Guru's displeasure by making over to his son-in-law the horse and *Khilat* the Guru had given him for his personal use.

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sufficient troops. Accordingly in April 1634 A.D. the Guru was attacked at Kartarpur. A desperate battle was fought. The Guru killed the traitorous Payanda with his own hand, and the Moghul army was repulsed with great slaughter, Chandu's son also being among the slain.

Victorious as the Guru was, he did not think it safe to live any longer in the plains. Consequently he retired to Kiratpur in the hills where he lived in perfect peace till he died in 1644 A.D.

Hargovind was the first of the Sikh Gurus to have entered upon a military career. And his record shows that he had not girt the sword upon his loins in vain. "After Hargovind the 'disciples' were in little danger of relapsing into the limited merit or utility of monks and mendicants."* Not only was it made clear to them that worldly pursuits were quite compatible with the deepest religious spirit and highest piety and to bear arms in defence of their homes and hearths was a paramount duty,† but their continued successes had made them realize their own power and the weakness of the Moghul Government. An anecdote is given in Dabistan which shows the great power to which the Sikhs under Hargovind had attained. One of his followers one day smote the nose off an image. The several neighbouring Rajas, who were of course all idolatrous, *complained* to the Guru. The Guru summoned the Sikh and asked him if he had done it. The Sikh declared that he would suffer death if the god gave evidence against him. "How can the god speak", said the Rajas. "How will he save you then", retorted the Sikh, and there the matter ended.

That the Guru was fully conscious of his latent influence and the great capabilities of his followers is shown by another

* Cunningham, p. 54.

† Manu allows the destruction of atatais, *i.e.*, aggressors.

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anecdote which is given in the same book. In course of conversation with the author of Dabistan who was one of his intimate friends * the Guru once played upon the credulity, or rebuked the vanity, of his Muhammadan friend. "A Raja of the North", said he, "has sent an ambassador to ask about a place called Delhi and the name and parentage of its King. I was astonished that he had not heard of the Commander of the Faithful, the lord of the ascendant, &c !"†

* Mohsin Fani states in his book that he came in contact with the Guru in 1053 A. H. and his account of the first five Gurus was communicated to him by Hargovind while his account of the sixth Guru is based upon his own observations.

† See Cunningham, p. 57.

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CHAPTER VIII.

PEACEFUL ORGANISATION.

I.—Har Rai (1645—1662).

Hargovind was succeeded by his grandson, Har Rai, the younger son of his eldest son Gurditta who had predeceased him. Har Rai was only fourteen when he ascended the gaddi. The Sikhs had just passed through a stormy career, and it was natural that a pause should ensue.

The cause of peace was moreover strengthened by two additional causes :—

1. One was the natural disposition of Har Rai, who was endowed with a peace-loving nature and reflective mind, preferring the solitude of hills and quiet meditation to the excitement of the chase or the din of war. It is said that while walking one day in his garden his cloak came in contact with a number of flowers and dashed them to the ground. The Guru was so touched with the incident that ever after he carried his cloak carefully in his hand when walking in his garden.* A man who was moved by the destruction of a flower, like Har Rai, was not fit to lead armies against the Moghuls.

2. The temptation to arms offered by the mild rule of Jahangir and Shahjahan was removed by the iron hand of Aurangzeb in whose time the Moghul Government attained the highest vigour and power. The ruthless way in which he disposed of his brothers and father was not calculated to encourage hope or confidence in a rebel of Har Rai's position and character.

Owing to these circumstances the only time Guru Har Rai had recourse to arms was when he was called upon by friendship's claims to defend Dara Shikoh who was all but a Hindu and a sort of disciple of the Guru's. In 1648 A. D.

* The story is given in Panth Prakash.

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the prince's life had been saved by a medicine sent by the Guru. Ever since then he felt grateful to him and his Hindu sentiments and admiration of the Guru's pious life had strengthened their relations into incimate friendship. It was in 1658 A. D. when Dara was being hotly pursued by Aurangzeb's troops that he resorted to the Guru for help. The Guru sent out a detachment of his men who contested the passage of the Beas with Aurangzeb's troops, and prevented them from crossing the river until Dara had reached a place of comparative safety.

Aurangzeb was not the man to forget this affront from an unexpected quarter and as soon as he was established on the throne of Delhi he summoned the Guru to his presence. Har Rai did not answer the summons in person but sent his eldest son Ram Rai to explain the matter to his Majesty. Ram Rai was treated kindly,* but was detained as a hostage at the Court to insure the tranquillity of the Punjab.

Har Rai never took up arms afterwards but busied himself in the work of peaceful organisation. Some of the most

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* Ram Rai seems to have been a clever courtier, caring more for the Emperor's pleasure than for the strict truth. There is a line in the Granth which means, "The dust of the Moslem's body was made into potter's clay and manufactured into bricks and pots and when put in the fire it raised a cry of agony." The Emperor asked him why the Mussalman had been thus abused in the sacred book. The diplomatic boy at once said that it was a mistake of the scribe. The word really meant was *Be Iman*, or an infidel, and not Mussalman. No wonder that Aurangzeb was pleased and pardoned the Guru. For Ram Rai, however, his cleverness proved suicidal. The Guru was enraged to hear at what cost of truth and courage his safety had been purchased, and forthwith disinherited his cowardly though clever son. The anecdote is given on the authority of Panth Prakash. Cunningham wrongly ascribes Ram Rai's disinherison to his being born of an inferior mother or maidservant. Har Rai had four wives, *all sisters, being born of the same parents*. The Sikh writers give the names of the four maids that accompanied Har Rai's four wives, but not even the remotest suggestion is made about Ram Rai's being born of any one of them.

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powerful families were converted by him and made members of the Sikh theocracy.

Bhai Bhaktu,* the founder of the Bhai family of Kythel, whose co-operation proved so important to Lord Lake during his pursuit of Holkar was a companion of Guru Har Rai.

The important Bhai family of Bagarian† also trace their origin to the same Guru, and Dharm Singh, their ancestor, came into prominence under him. Phool, the ancestor of the ruling chiefs of Patiala, Jhind and Nabha, and Kala, the first of the Sardars of Lohgarh, were also set on their way to greatness by the fostering care of Har Rai.

II.—Harkishen and Tegh Bahadur (1661-1675).

Har Rai died in 1661 A. D. leaving the gaddi to his younger son Harkishen who was only five years old at the time of accession. Ram Rai, the elder brother, was a favorite at the court of Aurangzeb, and complained to the Emperor against his father's decision setting aside his superior claims‡ to the gaddi, and pointed out how under the rule of an infant, as Harkishen was, the whole work of his ancestors

* It was *Gora*, son of Bhaktu, who once saved the Guru's harem and baggage from falling into the hands of the Moghul army while crossing the Sutlej.

† Between the Sutlej and the Jumna.

‡ It would have been too preposterous for Ram Rai to lay claim to the gaddi if he had been the son of a handmaiden as Cunningham would suggest, and I have already shown that he could not be born of an inferior mother, for his step-mothers and his own mother were all the daughters of a leading Khatri of Anupshahr. The giving away of all the daughters to one man is a curious phenomenon but not difficult to understand when we consider that the more respectable and old fashioned Hindus would not give their daughter to another man if she was once intended to be married to one man. The cases of Chandu's daughter and the daughter of the third Guru himself are cases in point. In the case under discussion the grandfather, the father, the mother and the eldest brother each individually intended to marry a girl to the Guru and their choices being all different and the bridegroom elect being the Guru all the four had to go together.

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would go to wreck and ruin, and the more ambitious of their followers would be unchecked to create trouble in the Punjab. This appeal was based on plausible grounds and the Emperor summoned the infant Guru to his presence. Harkishen reached Delhi and was confirmed in the succession but was soon down with small-pox of which he died in 1664 A. D.*

While on his death bed he sent the insignia of Guruship to his grandfather's younger brother Tegh Bahadur, who lived the life of a recluse in the village of Bakala.† Tegh Bahadur ascended the gaddi in 1664. He was a man of peaceful disposition, and though he had been accompanying his father in his warfare, and his father had left his arms to him, he preferred to be called Degh Bahadur‡ rather than by his warlike name. His piety and hospitality soon spread his fame, and Sikhs from all sides began to flock to him. Though a man of great humility and simple tastes in private life his darbar always possessed royal splendour and magnificence, and he was always spoken of and addressed as Sachcha Padshah or true king. Ram Rai was still a favourite at the imperial court and had never ceased to cherish a hope

* Harkishen was an exceptionally bright boy. Many anecdotes illustrating his prodigious intelligence are given by Sikh writers. Cunningham says he was once taken into the Royal Palace at Delhi as the Ladies of the Harem wanted to see him. He was surrounded on all sides by ladies who were equally well dressed, and was asked to find out the Empress who was among them. Harkishen at once recognised her and went and sat in her lap. (According to Panth Prakash it was the Rani of Jey Singh Sawai on whom the test was made). There is another interesting anecdote showing his extraordinary wit. Aurangzeb one day caught hold of both his hands in one of his and said "what can you do now if I give you a slap"? "O King of Kings!" said the boy, "he whom you take by one hand has nothing to fear. What have I to fear now you have taken both my hands!"

† It is remarkable that even when succession became hereditary the best available men were appointed to the Masnad of Guruship. Even this child of eight made the best choice, passing over his own brother and uncle.

‡ Hero of the cooking pot, *i.e.*, one who excels in hospitality and compassion.

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to be one day installed in his father's place. Aurangzeb only wanted a pretext to get rid of a formidable man like Tegh Bahadur who stood in the way of his Islamic zeal. On a representation being made by Ram Rai he was summoned to Delhi. The Raja of Jeypore, however, was one of the Guru's admirers, and he interceded on his behalf saying "such holy men rather went on pilgrimages than aspired to sovereignty, and he would take him with him on his approaching march to Bengal." Tegh Bahadur accompanied the Raja * to the East, went with him to Assam, and helped him in gaining the victory over the Raja of Assam† who afterwards became a follower of the Guru.

After this the Guru returned to the Punjab, and buying a piece of land from the Raja of Kahloor founded the village of Makhowal and settled there. The Sikhs flocked to him again and this gave another opportunity to Ram Rai to poison the Emperor's mind, if it required any poisoning at all, against Tegh Babadur. He was again summoned to Delhi on charges of treason, and refusing to embrace Islam, was put to death by the Emperor's orders with two of his chief companions, one of whom was Mati Ram, the head of the Bhai family of Karyala in the Jhelum district. "The truth," says Cunningham, "seems to be that Tegh Bahadur followed the example of his father with unequal footsteps, and that, choosing for his haunts the wastes between Hansee and the Sutlej, he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder, in a way, indeed, that rendered him not unpopular with the peasantry. He is further credibly represented to

* Jai Singh according to all accounts. Tod in his Annals of Rajasthan, however, says it was Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh, who went to Assam. Panth Prakash mentions Raja Bishan Singh, the son of Jai Singh, as in charge of the expedition to Assam. Both the princes might have been there.

† Panth Prakash gives Ram Rai as his name.

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have leagued with a Muhammadan zealot, named Hafiz Adam, and to have levied contributions upon rich Hindoos, while his confederate did the same upon wealthy Mussulmans. They gave a ready asylum to all fugitives, and their power interfered with the prosperity of the country; the imperial troops marched against them, and they were at last defeated and made prisoners. The Muhammadan Saint was banished, but Aurangzeb determined that the Sikh should be put to death."*

From this brief account we find that Tegh Bahadur could not do much for the military organization of the Sikhs. He *reigned* for about ten years, but all this time he was harassed by domestic quarrels and Aurangzeb's hatred. No time was left him to rally together the broken and scattered forces of his father, and lead them against the imperial troops, even if he had not been deterred by the boundless power of Aurangzeb. Still, however, we find from *Tegh Bahadur's Travels*† that he toured through the Malwa country and completed the work which his predecessors had done in the Majha and Doaba territories. In his death, however, he surpassed anything that he had done in life. He was known throughout Upper India, was highly revered by Rajput princes, and was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the Punjab. His execution was universally regarded by the Hindus as a sacrifice for their faith. The whole Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge. The sturdy jats of Majha and Malwa only wanted a leader under whose banner they could fight and avenge the insult done to their religion. This leader they found in the youthful Govind.

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* This is given on the authority of Syed Ghulam Husain, the bigoted author of Sair-al-Mutaakhkhirin, which is also quoted but not deferred to by the author of the Panth Prakash. Cunningham has wrongly put Adam Hafiz for Hafiz Adam, see *Sair*, p. 491 (Nawalkishore Press).

† Translated into English by Sardar Atar Singh, Chief of Bhadaur.

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CHAPTER IX.

SIKHISM UNDER GOVIND.

His Position and Plans (1675-1695).

The death of Tegh Bahadur marks a most important epoch in the history of Sikhism. Under Govind its character was entirely changed. The Sikhs had undoubtedly given some promise of their future greatness even before the advent of Govind Singh, nevertheless the chief characteristics of Sikhism were still devotion and piety. Under Govind, pugnacity and valour became the most important features of the sect. As the innovations made by Govind were most radical in their nature, and the task undertaken by him was most gigantic and arduous, it seems to be necessary to make a brief review of the circumstances under which he was placed and of the advantages and disadvantages of the situation in which he found himself at his father's death.

We have seen how Nanak emancipated the minds of the Punjab Hindus from superstition, hypocrisy and cant, how Angad gave the early Sikhs an individuality of their own, and how Amar Das saved them from drifting into asceticism and aimlessness of life. We have also seen how Ram Das extended the power and influence of his sect, and how Arjun made it into a theocratic community by giving it a code, a capital, a treasury and a Chief in the person of the Guru. It has also been stated how the sixth Guru organised a sort of army and by winning continuous victories showed the Sikhs the possibilities open to their race. The work of military organisation was checked after that by the peaceful nature of the succeeding Gurus and the vigour of Aurangzeb's rule. The interval of peace was followed by the execution of Tegh Bahadur which stirred up once more the dying embers of Sikh hatred of the Moslem rule.

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This was the past which Govind inherited, and it is evident that it was not a mean asset in the glorious career upon which he was about to enter.

Another circumstance which operated for the benefit of Govind was the constitution and condition of the Moghul Government under which he lived. In the first place, India was quite destitute of any constitution. The will of the sovereign was the law of the land, and the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors followed the example set by their liege-lord. The courts, where they at all existed, were centres of corruption and mere manufactories of oppression and extortion, and, where offences against the State were concerned, there was not even a semblance of justice. The Government was an absolute despotism maintained by the sword and supported by fomenting differences between the Sesodia and the Rathor and by setting the Sawais against both, and all the three against the Mahrattas.

To the innate defects and evils of the system was added the bigotry and fanaticism of Aurangzeb. Hindus were deprived of all State patronage and excluded from all Government offices. A capitation tax, known as the Jizya, was imposed upon them and they were even forbidden to go in palanquins or ride Arab horses. Temples were razed to the ground, sacred threads were broken, and Hindus were compelled to embrace Islam. The result was that all Hindus were disaffected and began to think of putting an end to this galling tyranny. Nor was the Government a compact body. Aurangzeb was suspicious of every one and his suspicions soon reached such a climax that, driven by wild dismay and panic, he sent his own son to prison. When a Government reaches this stage of uncertainty, suspicion, dismay and panic, it may safely be said to be on a fair way to ruin. The sun of the Moghul power had reached its zenith towards the middle of Aurangzeb's reign, and was

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swiftly descending to the horizon during the declining years of the emperor. Muhammadan as well as Hindu chiefs were always on the point of rebellion, and could only be kept down by the sword, with the result that the foundations of the empire were being gradually undermined.

Another circumstance which worked advantageously for Guru Govind Singh was the fact that Aurangzeb was busily engaged in subduing the independent Kingdoms of the Deccan and in trying to nip in the bud the rising power of the Mahrattas. He could not trust any of his generals, and like all masterful and conceited geniuses believed that everything would go wrong but for his personal supervision. This necessitated his absence from the Capital for many years, and left the Punjab free for any enterprising spirit to mature his plans.

The constitution of the Moghul Government, the bigotry of Aurangzeb, and the Deccan wars, thus afforded a great advantage to Govind Singh, and he was fully prepared to make the best use of it. Still, however, thanks to the tolerance of Akbar and the genius of Todar Mal, the country was thoroughly organised. It was divided into *Subahs*, *Subahs* into minor divisions, under *Karoris** who had the *Amils* under them, while the *Amils* worked through the *Karkuns* and *Khasnavises* who were paid to keep order in the villages, and to collect the revenue. The system was practically the same as to-day and minus the advantages of Railway and Telegraph, information was as easily and completely available to the Moghuls in those days as it is to-day to the British rulers of India† Again though the ordinary Hindus were under a

* The officer in charge of a tract of land producing one Karor of *tankas* annually or Rs. 3,12,500.

† Akbar had established an efficient post system, having two horsemen and some footmen stationed at every five Kos. *Latif's History of the Punjab.*

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ban, and were excluded from Government service, Hindus of position and rank were not wanting who had thrown in their lot with the Government of the day, and in return for the protection and favour they received or for merely being suffered to retain their lands, always sided with the Government of the day, and at the slightest disturbance of the peace came forward with declarations of loyalty and offers of active support. This means that although the masses of the Hindus were bitter against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officiously loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements, because they feared the loss of court favour and ultimately the loss of land and power which their neutrality as well as supposed complexity was sure to bring in its wake.

Moreover, the Punjab was the first to be conquered, and, if Moghul Government was thoroughly established anywhere, it was in the Punjab; situated between Delhi and Cabul it was most rigidly supervised and most strongly governed. Muhammadan population was the largest, and, consisting of the peasantry as it did, it was the strongest in the Punjab. And although the masses of Muhammadans lived side by side with Hindus as brothers and sisters, and did not approve of the bigotry of Aurangzeb, they could not be expected to countenance any movement which had for its aim the overthrow of the Muhammadan Government.

In addition to these disadvantages the Guru had to contend with the members of his own family* who had been driven by personal grudges into the enemy's camp, and spared no pains to thwart, harass and injure Govind Singh. Guru Govind Singh's father had been raised to the gaddi

* As these rivalries began after the fourth Guru, the following genealogical tree of his descendants will facilitate the understanding of their relations.

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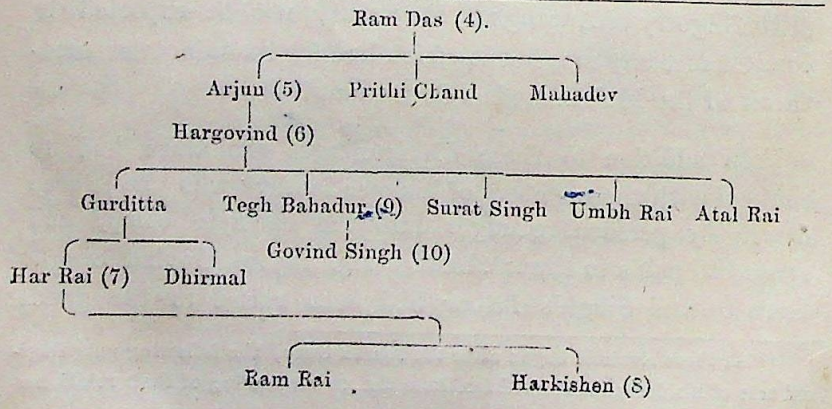
in preference to the descendants of his eldest brother, and his cousins had never forgiven him for what they called the usurpation of their title. Ram Rai and Dhir Mal were favourites at the Court, and had played a great part in inciting Aurangzeb to have Govind's father executed on charges of treason and heresy. The execution of the father, however, brought no relief to the son, for his rivals continued actively to pour poison into the Emperor's ears, and for some time Govind not only felt incapacitated to carry on his propaganda but was never sure even of his personal safety.

It was in this position that the young Govind found himself in 1675 after the execution of his father by the Government of Delhi. He was hardly fifteen years old at the time. To think of revenge or active resistance was out of the question. His martyred father had no doubt before leaving for Delhi invested him with the insignia of Guruship, and the faithful Sikhs were ready to follow any leader who would revenge their Guru's death, but howsoever strong might Govind's determination have been, it would have been suicidal for a little boy of fifteen to declare open war at once against one of the greatest empires of the world. His grandfather had no doubt succeeded in getting together an irregular army of seven thousand men and defeating the imperial troops in



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two or three actions but these very successes were now working, in a way, against Govind Singh. The Government, then taken by surprise, was now always on the alert. The mild Shahjahan had been succeeded by the iron-handed Aurangzeb. The Sikh army consisting largely of free-booters and rebels had been dispersed, and the policy of peace followed by Govind's immediate predecessors, whether by inclination or by necessity, had in no way encouraged the growth of the military spirit which the sixth Guru had infused into his followers. The whole work had thus to be done from the beginning. Govind was obviously reduced, for a time, to a state of utter helplessness. The whole Province was terror-stricken under the active bigotry of Aurangzeb,* and for the time being it seemed to be sure death to Govind even to venture into the plains of the Punjab. The hills were the only parts of the province which had not been thoroughly subdued. Their inaccessibility and comparative barrenness had saved them from annexation. Guru Govind Singh thought it best to take refuge in those natural fastnesses, quietly nurse his wrath, and mature his plans for avenging his father's death and emancipating his down-trodden race. Most great men who have left any mark in the history of their race have practised seclusion and retirement, and in the solitude of the hills or the forest, of monasteries or of the desert, have practised austerities and meditation which are the only means of self-conquest without which the conquest of the world is a dream. The great Buddha was in the jungle for years and years. Christ disappeared from the world while quite a boy and emerged from his seclusion at the age of thirty. The Prophet of Islam was in practical seclusion up to the age of forty-five. Govind followed their example,

* He appointed Mullahs with a party of horse attached to each to check all display of Hindu religious activity. Latif's *History of the Punjab*, p. 176.

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and retired to the hills to gather strength and wait until the time was ripe to strike a blow.

In the quiet seclusion of the Himalayan mountains the young Guru set himself first to the task of self-improvement. For anyone, who wants to do the kind of work Govind did, it is essential to have all the benefits that education can give, and to develop all his faculties to the highest degree of perfection possible. He called together great Pandits from Patna and Benares and great scholars of Persian from the Punjab. He had thus a large number of scholars and poets in his service and the names of almost 60 of them have been handed down to posterity. He assiduously learnt all they could teach him, and hereditary as the gift of poetry had been in his family, he developed a style of Hindi poetry which has remained unsurpassed since his times. He went through the whole range of Epic literature in Sanskrit, and stored his mind with the soul-stirring legends of the Mahabharata and the Puranas. He seems to have been deeply impressed by the idea which runs throughout the Pauranic literature, *viz.*, the idea of a saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and destroy unrighteousness, to uproot evil and establish good, to destroy the oppressor and rescue the weak and the innocent.* The stories of Rama destroying the Demon King of Lanka, the son of Devaki crushing Kansa, and especially the exploits of that personification of righteousness and divine power, called Durga, breaking the skulls, and drinking the blood, of Mahkhasur and other demons filled his heart with hope and confidence. These stories read in the light of the existing tyranny and oppression on the one hand, and weakness and innocence on the other, made him feel that the time was again ripe for the fulfilment of Sri Krishna's promise for the appearance of one who would

* *Cf.* Gita, IV, 7, 8.

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come to the rescue of the helpless and strike down the arrogant oppressors. And like all great men who have helped in the advancement of humanity he felt that he himself was the man required by the times. He has related his story in a powerful poem, called *Vichitra Natak* in which he declares that God had been sending down great teachers from time to time for the guidance of the human race, but, he deplores, that many of them began to arrogate divine honours to themselves. Though deeply impressed by the great truth embodied in the doctrine of divine incarnation, *viz.*, God's coming to the rescue of humanity in times of need, he regretted that the various messengers and prophets sent by God had either claimed divine honours for themselves or the world had raised them to the position of God. Therefore while strongly believing in his heaven-ordained mission he humbly declared that he was but a servant of the Supreme Being, and anybody calling him God would pass life after life in hell."

The result of the twenty years' seclusion and solitude that the Guru enjoyed in the midst of the Himalayan hills may be described in the following words :—

(1) He received the best practical education that the times could give, and ran through the whole range of Persian and Sanskrit Epic and historical literature.

(2) By practice and by association with the most eminent Hindi poets of the day he developed a class of warlike poetry, unknown in the Punjab before, which he turned to such a great account in rousing the dormant energies of the people.

(3) He acquired a mastery in riding and shooting, being specially an adept in the use of the bow. He

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accustomed himself to fatigue and hardy life by constantly hunting the tiger and the wild boar in the thick forests of the hills.

(4) He realized the miserable condition of his race, and by constant meditation came to feel that he had a mission to fulfil, and God had sent him for the amelioration of his nation.

(5) He chalked out for himself the lines on which he was to work, and his plan was formed with such a decision and completeness that not a tittle of the policy he had settled was abandoned or changed by him throughout his chequered and stormy career.

The object that the Guru set before himself was to infuse a new life into the dead bones of the Hindus, to make them forget their differences and present a united front against the tyranny and persecution to which they were exposed, in one word, to make once more a living nation of them and enable them to regain their lost independence.

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CHAPTER X.

GOVIND CREATES A NATION:

1695 A. D.

From this point onward the work of Guru Govind Singh can be divided into two parts, *viz.* :—

(1) The creation of a nation, and

(2) his armed campaigns.

When I say the creation of a nation, I mean the words to be taken quite literally, for when Guru Govind Singh began his work, there was no such thing as a Hindu nation. Like Sivaji he had first to forge the sword with which he was to fight.

Since the fall of Anangpal no leader had arisen in the Punjab. Although some Hindu Zemindars who called themselves Rajas still lurked and lingered in the mountain fastnesses of Kangra, the Hindus had ceased to exist as a political power in the Punjab. Guru Nanak had considerably elevated the morals of the Punjab Hindus, and other predecessors of Govind had done something to make a peaceful organisation of them. But the work of making a nation of them was reserved for the exceptional genius of Govind. And the method he adopted to achieve his object, though not quite original, proved most effectual under the circumstances. He had realized that the Hindus as a race were too mild by nature, too contented in their desires, too modest in their aspirations, too averse to physical exertion and hopelessly scrupulous in giving pain to others, even to their enemies. He also realised that they were a religious people, and terror-stricken and demoralised as they had become they were still strongly attached to religion and had shown great readiness to suffer for their faith. There could be only one way of

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moving such a race. They had religion but no nationality. The only way to make a nation of them was to make nationalism their religion. And Guru Govind Singh did make nationalism a religion with them, and all that goes to form nationality was incorporated as articles of faith in this new creed.

The first element of nationalism is unity, and this point was the first to receive Govind's attention. He had realised that caste was a great barrier to unity, especially the caste as it existed in his time. Govind sent some of his disciples to one Raghu Nath Pandit to study Sanskrit with him. He refused to teach them because they were not Brahmans. This supercilious exclusiveness, Govind rightly understood, was not calculated to encourage the growth of nationalism. He therefore struck at the very root of the evil by declaring that caste was an after-growth in the Hindu social system, and no body could call himself a true Sikh if he did not give up the prejudice of caste, and did not regard all his fellow-Sikhs as his brothers. The four castes, he said, were like *pan, supari, chuna* and *kath, i. e.*, betel-leaf, betel-nut, lime and catechu, none of which by itself could give ruddiness to the lips, strength to the teeth or relish to the tongue. Guru Govind not only made one caste out of the four, but he went a step further and at once removed all unevenness of religious privileges and established a theocratic democracy. In his *Rahat Nama*, or Rules of Conduct, he declares that "the *Lord could only be beheld by the eye of faith in the general body of the Khalsa.*" This meant that the Khalsa formed a brotherhood in which the lowest was equal with the highest.

The Guru embraced everyone into his fold and gave everyone to drink of the *Amrit** or nectar of the creed that he had discovered.

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* *Amrit Chhakna* or drinking nectar is another name for Sikh Baptism.

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One day as the Guru lay encamped on the hill of Keshgarh, he addressed a mass meeting of his followers. At the end of his speech he drew out his sword and said in a loud voice that the goddess, by which he meant the sword, every day asked him for a head. "Is there any Sikh", he asked, "who is prepared to lay down his head for the goddess."* For a moment there was dead silence. The Guru asked again, and Daya Ram, one of his followers, stepped forward. He took him by the hand into his tent where he had a goat provided beforehand. He seated the heroic Daya in the tent, and slaying the goat with his own hand, came out with the blood dripping from his sword. He appealed again for a head, with the blood-red sword brandished in the air. Another Sikh came forward, and another, and yet another two, making five altogether, prepared to lay down their heads at one word from their leader. The Guru was over-joyed at this signal proof of heroic devotion and self-sacrifice. He brought them out from his tent all alive and hale and hearty to the great wonder of the audience, and declared that it was a very good omen, and the success of the Khalsa was assured. All the Sikhs present there were greatly ashamed at their cowardice and were smitten with sorrow and regret for not having made a voluntary offering of themselves at the feet of their leader.

Of the five who had offered their heads, one was a Khatri, all the rest being so-called Sudras. But the Guru called them *Panj Payaras*, or the Beloved Five, and baptised them after the manner he had introduced for initiation into

* This version is according to the Pant Prakash. English historians, including Cunningham hold that a head was required for sacrifice to the goddess and Cunningham says twenty-five Sikhs offered themselves, one of whom was sacrificed. This version, however, does not find favour with Sikh historians and as Cunningham has not given any authority for his version it is hardly reliable.

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his brotherhood. He enjoined the same duties upon them, gave them the same privileges and as a token of newly acquired brotherhood all of them dined together.

But the Guru's views of democratic equality were much more advanced than the mere equality among his followers could satisfy. In his system there was no place even for the privileges of the chief or the leader. No leader, he believed, could be fit to lead unless he was elected or accepted by the followers. History shows that any individual or class enjoying a religious or sacerdotal superiority has been only too loth to forego even a particle of its privileges. But the Guru, though regarded by his faithful followers as the greatest of prophets, was made of different stuff, and had too much political insight to stand on an exclusive eminence apart from his followers. Therefore when he had initiated his first five disciples, his beloved five, he was initiated by them in turn, taking the same vows as they had done, and claiming no higher privileges than those he had allowed them. Soon after he called a meeting* of all his followers and announced his new doctrines to them.

This, the destruction of caste prejudice, the introduction of a theocratic democracy, was the first step that Govind took to bring about unity which is the first element of nationalism. He supplemented this moral force by some other ordinances, some of which may be called more or less mechanical in their nature. They were as follow :—

(1) All the Sikh names were to end alike, as they do up to this.

(2) All had to follow one form of salutation.

(3) There was to be no external object of homage except the Granth.

*As many as 80,000 Sikhs assembled in less than a fortnight. Latif, p. 263

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(4) The multiplicity of Hindu places of pilgrimage was too great to encourage national unity, so the Guru fixed upon Amritsar as the chief place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs, and that town has ever since been the Mecca of the followers of the Gurus, and all classes of Sikhs whether Brahmans or Pariahs are allowed to bathe in the tank of nectar and worship in Hari Mandir or the temple of God.

(5) The Guru strengthened these bonds of union by certain still more mechanical devices which are quite original, and which have remained intact throughout the last two centuries, and are at the present day acquiring still greater importance and strength. "The Guru was a philosopher," says Cunningham, "and understood fully how the imaginations of men could be wrought upon." He thoroughly realised the hypnotising power of certain external forms and symbols, and knew what an inspiration men often receive from a change in their outward appearance. This is the secret of the power of pledges and vows, of penances and austerities, and even such sectarian symbols, as the frontal mark of a Shakti-worshipper or the Tulsi necklace of a Vaishnavite. This is the secret of the Hindu *upanayana* and the Christian baptism. This was the significance of the *pahul** or the baptism introduced by Govind and it was to induce that electric force that he introduced certain other ordinances by

* The ceremony of *pahul* is conducted as follows :—The candidate, after he has bathed and put on clean clothes, takes his seat in the midst of the assembly, generally called together for the purpose. A Sikh who has the reputation of being regular in the observance of Sikh rules of conduct mixes some sugar with water in an iron basin and stirs it with a double-edged dagger, at the same time chanting some verses of the Granth Sahib. After that this solution is sprinkled over the hair and body of the candidate and a part of it is given him to drink. He is made to repeat certain vows which constitute the *Raht* or the Sikh rules of conduct. The solution is called *Amrit* and is supposed to confer immortality on this new son of Govind Singh and makes him a *Singh* (lion) and a true Kshatrya. At the end of the ceremony *Karah Prasad* or *Halwa* is distributed among those present.

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which the Sikhs stood out as the chosen of the Lord with a mission to fulfil in this world. He made it a rule that all Sikhs should abstain from smoking, and should wear turbans and always keep the following five Kakars or five things whose names begin with K. *viz.*, *Kesh* or long hair and long beards, *Kangha* or comb, *Kripan* or a sword or a knife, *Kara* or a steel bracelet, and *Kachh* or a sort of nicker-bocker which came to possess the same significance as the *toga virilis* of the Roman youth. The observances at once singled out the genuine Sikhs from the mass of the luke-warm Hindus and produced a cohesion in the internal body of the Khalsa which was in a short time to make a united nation of them.

Abolition of caste, equality of privileges with one another and with the Guru, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common baptism for all classes, and lastly, common external appearance—these were the means, besides common leadership and the community of aspirations, which Govind employed to bring about unity among his followers, and by which he bound them together into a compact mass before they were hurled against the legions of the great Moghuls.

But a mass of wax figures bearing the same hall-mark and dressed up in the same fashion, or a number of gramophones repeating the same records cannot form a nation. The individuals forming that nation must have life, high aspirations, the will to do and the soul to dare, before they can truly form a nation.

The Guru thoroughly understood the importance of raising their position and aspirations and of inspiring them with confidence and courage. The following were among the means he employed to achieve this very difficult object :—

1. In the first place he inspired them with a belief that they were now under the direct control and protection of God.

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They were taught as an article of faith to believe that God was always present in the general body of the Khalsa, and that wherever even five Sikhs were assembled the Guru would be with them.

2. They were further impressed with the idea that they were born to conquer. A political leader has no claim to any leadership if he is not strongly optimistic and does not believe in the ultimate triumph of his cause. The Guru was an embodiment of hope and confidence, and his followers were saturated with the same belief. The new salutation among the Sikhs was to be "*Wahgurujika Khalsa, Wahguruji ki Fateh.*" The Lord's is the Khalsa, Lord's be the victory. A strong conviction of one's being the chosen instrument of God, and the confidence it inspires, are the strongest guarantees of success, and the Guru had given these guarantees to his followers.

3. To raise their spirits still higher, the Guru changed their name from *Sikh* into *Singh*, thus making lions of humble disciples, and "raising them with one stroke to a position of equality with the noblest and most warlike class in India," for up to that time, only the Rajputs could bear the exalted title of Singh. They were now as good and as great as the members of the Solar and the Lunar dynasties.

4. Literature was the next means employed to infuse a warlike spirit into the hearts of his followers. The Guru had a large army of poets and Pandits in his service and he caused all the stirring stories in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, in Srimad Bhagwat and other Puranas to be translated into Hindi. "I have," he says, "cast the Dasam of Bhagwat into Hindi with no other desire but only for the love of holy war." Peasants and Banyas, clerks and munshis who had for centuries either read nothing, or had fed themselves on Kareema and Gulistan, Bahar-i-Danish

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and Bostan, were now reading or listening in their own tongue the heroic exploits of Rama and Lakshmana, Bheem and Arjuna, and discussing how the infant Krishna killed the demon Kansa, and how the fragile goddess despatched with her own hand demons like Mahikhasura. The Guru was himself a great poet, and on minds saturated with the spirit of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata his words produced an electrifying effect. "I shall send a sparrow" said he "and lo! the imperial falcons will fall before it." "Each one of my Sikhs," he said, "will fight a hundred thousand or I will not be called Guru Govind Singh."* Such words uttered by a man like Govind Singh could never fail to have the desired effect. Men who had never touched a sword or shouldered a gun became heroes. Confectioners and washermen and sweepers and barbers became leaders of armies before whom the Rajas quailed and the Nawabs cowered with terror.

Guru Govind also realized that the overthrow of the oppressive despotism would remain a dream unless the Hindus became all sting. He therefore appealed to his followers to withdraw their attention from the pen and the plough, and regard the sword as their principal stay in the world. The country of the enemy, whether the oppressive Moghul or the traitorous Hindu, lay open to their enterprise, and the sword could carve their way to power and prosperity, national honour and independence. Robbing the robber, the Guru declared was no sin, and to torment one's tormentors was allowed by the Shastras. The Sikhs finding a new field opened to their ambition began to flock to the Guru in thousands, ceased to remain mere *Sikhs*, but became *Singhs* or

* Even the prayers introduced by Govind contain imprecations against the Malechhas and invoke God's help for their destruction. Even the water used for baptism was to be stirred with a double-edged dagger.

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lions, and began to roam with freedom and hunt their prey in the preserves of the tyrannical despot. These pursuits of the nascent Khalsa added great strength to the brotherhood. They brought funds to the Society, gave exercise to the members, accustomed them to the hardships of military life, made them familiar with the art of guerilla warfare, won over the lukewarm and struck a terror into the hearts of the enemy, while the hearts of the Khalsa were strengthened and encouraged by the daily victories.

The worship of Shakti or the goddess of force was very popular among the masses of the Hindus, and it seems that, though enjoined to worship none but the Supreme Being, even the Sikhs cherished a lingering faith in the power of the goddess, and believed in the efficacy of *hom* and other ceremonies to invoke the aid of the goddess. The Guru did not believe in any deity except the True and Deathless one, but whether to show his followers that there was no such power, or to win over the popular sympathy and confidence of the populace as the chosen favourite of their favourite Deity, it seems to be beyond doubt (as all historians agree on the point) that the Guru ordered a great sacrifice to be performed with the ostensible object of making the goddess appear. The ceremony is said to have lasted for a year. At the end of that time when Durga Ashtami came round again the Guru asked the presiding priest when the goddess would make her appearance. The Pandit said that the goddess would reveal herself only if a pure and holy man of noble lineage sacrifised himself at the altar, and had his head flung into the fire. The Guru was apparently pleased, and said to the Pandit with a smile of sarcasm on his lips "where shall we find, reverend sir, a holier man than yourself whose head could form a more fitting offering to the goddess!" The Pandit was struck dumb and decamped on a false pretext. The Guru

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flung all the remaining material into the fire and came out from behind the screens with a drawn sword flashing in his hand. The large quantity of the *hom* material thrown in a lump into the fire blazed forth in a large flame which being on a lofty hill was seen for miles all around, and was taken as a sign of the propitiation and appearance of the Goddess. The sword which the Guru had brought brandishing in his hand was looked upon as the gift of the goddess to the Guru, and a pledge of victory in his contemplated war upon the enemies of his race. It is not certain if the Guru took any steps to disillusion the people on this point, but this much is quite certain that he appealed to the people to worship the sword because in those times the sword was the only goddess that could save them. The Guru seems to have meant it to be taken as something more than a mere metaphor. "The sentiment of veneration," says Cunningham, "for that which gives us power, or safety or our daily bread may be traced in all countries. In our own, a sailor impersonates, or almost deifies his ship, and in India the custom of hereditary callings has heightened that feeling which expressed in the language of philosophy becomes the dogma admitting the soul to be increate indeed, but enveloped in the understanding, which again, is designed for our use in the human affairs or until our bliss is perfect." It was this external or inferior spirit, so to speak, which, the Guru urged, must devote its energies to the worship and contemplation of the sword while the increate soul contemplates God. The Guru cherished the sword as an object of worship and some of his finest verses are those he employed to invoke its aid.* His followers were required to stick to the worship of this great deliverer of mankind, and those who were devout in the worship of the sword were promised exemptions from every

* The following four verses of Govind Singh forming an invocation to the sword are among the finest of their kind to be met with in any literature

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other kind of religious rites or ceremonies. The devotees of the sword were to be *Krita-nasha, Kul-nasha, Dharma-nasha,* and *Karma-nasha,* and their devotion to the sword was to be regarded as an act of the highest merit which would bring them power and prosperity in this life and bliss and beatitude in the next.

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of the world and as they are almost wholly in Sanskrit they will be easily understood in all parts of India:—

Khaga khanda vihandam, khala dala khandam, ataran-mandam, vara bhandam ;

Bhuja danda akhandam, tejprachandam, jyotiamandam bhánuprabham,

Sukha santá karnam, kilvikh haranam, durmátidarnam ati sharnam,

Jaya jaya jagkáran srishti ubháran mampratipáran jaya tegham.—*Vichitra Natak.*

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CHAPTER XI.

GOVIND'S WARS, WANDERINGS AND DEATH (1695-1708).

The first half of the Guru's work was done. He had attained a perfect sway over the minds of his followers who were now prepared to follow him in life and in death. He had united them into a compact mass, had elevated their character, raised their aspirations, and withdrawn them from the peaceful occupations of their ancestors to give their undivided attention to the sword. This was by far the most important part of his life-work, and it was successfully accomplished.

But his father's death was still unavenged, the despotism of Aurangzeb was still unbroken, and the nation still groaned under the burden of tyranny and oppression. Great as the odds were against which he had to contend, the Guru could not be satisfied unless he had actually struck a blow at the power of Aurangzeb, and at least made an attempt for the emancipation of his race. And he addressed himself to this part of his work with characteristic energy and confidence. His followers now numbered thousands, and thousands were prepared to follow him into the field of battle and regarded it as a blessing to fight and die under his banner. He organised them into troops and bands, and supplemented them by engaging the services of 500 Pathans who formed a part of his cavalry.

His immediate object was to achieve a commanding influence among the Rajas of the hill States, and to establish a principality in the hills to serve as a base of operations against the Moghul empire. With this object in view he built two or three forts along the skirts of the hills between the Sutlej and the Jumna, a post at Pownta near Nahan—a

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place long afterwards the scene of a severe struggle between the Gurkhas and the English—a retreat at Anandpur, and a third fortress at Chamkaur* not far from the well-known town of Ropar.

"As a religious teacher," says Cunningham, "he drew contributions and procured followers from all parts of India but as a leader he perceived the necessity of a military pivot, and as a rebel he was not insensible to the value of a secure retreat."

The first step taken by the Guru, after this military organisation, was probably to induce the hill Rajas to join him in his proposed campaign against the Government. But he was not a Raja, and the hill chiefs regarded him as nothing more than a demagogue, and do not seem to have thought much of his organisation and power. Some of them even regarded him as an upstart and one of them went so far as to have demanded from him his favourite elephant together with some other of the choicest presents brought to him by one of his wealthiest and most zealous followers. The Guru was disgusted with the apathy of the hill chiefs and became exasperated at the insults and threats of the Raja of Bilaspur to whom he had refused to deliver up the presents above referred to. The Guru made up his mind to coerce these chieftains into submission, and in order to bring them to their senses he let loose his followers upon them. The Sikhs who had already tasted the joys of plunder ransacked the territories of the impotent but insolent chiefs, and reduced their subjects to a state of starvation by carrying away everything they could lay their hands upon.†

Being exasperated, the Rajas made a grand alliance, and Bheem Chand of Bilaspur, Kirpal Chand Katoch, Kesari Chand of Jassowa, Sukhdyal of Jasrotah, Hari Chand of

* Buti Shah adds 3 more, *viz.*, Fatehgarh, Lohgarh, Muktgarh.

† Panth Prakash.

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Nalagarh, Prithi Chand of Dadwala and Fateh Shah of Srinagar attacked the Guru with an army of ten thousand men. The Guru came forward to meet them at the head of two thousand chosen warriors, and a severe action was fought near the village of Bhangani. The Guru has himself described the battle in very spirited verse. The five hundred Afghans who formed a part of his cavalry, thinking it hopeless for the Guru to defeat the large army of the Rajas, deserted him just on the eve of the battle. But Syed Budhoo Shah, the chief of Sadhowra at whose recommendation the Guru had taken the Afghans into his service, hearing of this desertion, hastened to the Guru's help with a force of two thousand men and with this timely aid the Guru won a complete victory over the allied Rajas. After this victory the Guru returned in triumph to the fort at Paunta, held a great Darbar there, and in honour of this, his first victory, he bestowed robes of honour upon his generals. Syed Budhoo Shah whose timely help had contributed so much to the victory and whose own son had fallen in the action, received a comb and one-half of the Guru's own turban together with a certificate of honour, and the author of the Panth Prakash says that all these things are still preserved as sacred relics by the descendants of the Syed. After this the Guru built four new forts, *viz.*, Lohgarh, Anandgarh, Phoolgarh and Fatehgarh, and began to increase his military resources.

When the Rajas saw the increasing power of the Guru and realized what stuff he was made of, they began to regard his propaganda with the seriousness it deserved, and lost no more time in defying his counsels, and hastened to make an offensive and defensive alliance with him. The time had not yet come for them to take the offensive but they did not hesitate any longer in taking the position which is the first to be taken by all subject people entering upon a struggle for liberty. The Rajas, supported by the Guru, at once

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took up the course of passive resistance, and refused to send up their yearly tribute to the imperial exchequer. Aurangzeb was busy in the Deccan subduing the little but golden principality of Golcunda. The Rajas were, therefore, not interfered with for many years. As soon, however, as Aurangzeb was free, and returned to Delhi, he ordered an expedition against them and sent a large army under the command of Miyankhan, Alif Khan and Zulfikar Khan to realize the arrears from the rebellious chiefs. A bloody battle, described* in stirring verse by Guru Govind Singh in his Vichitra Natak, was fought near Nadaun in which the Rajas, with the help of the Khalsa, inflicted a severe defeat on the imperial troops. This defeat provoked Dilawar Khan, the Governor of Kangra, and he attacked the Rajas in person with a large force, while he sent his son Rustam Khan with a strong detachment to punish the Guru for aiding the Rajas. Rustam Khan lay encamped outside Anandpur when it rained so heavily one night that the neighbouring ravine was overflooded and carried away large numbers of the imperial troops and spread a panic among the rest. The result was that Rustam Khan had to beat a hasty retreat. The grateful Sikhs up to this day call the ravine by the name of *Himayati Nullah* or the helpful brook.

When the news of these disasters reached Aurangzeb he was beside himself with rage and sent his heir-apparent, Prince Muazzim, to restore order in the Punjab and realize the imperial dues from the rebellious Rajas.

The Prince himself took his position at Lahore, and sent an expedition under Mirza Beg to chastise the Guru and the Rajas. The expedition ended in disaster, to the great dis-

* These descriptions are of course not given in the spirit and style of a historian, the Guru's object being to rouse military spirit by his stirring verse rather than record history.

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appointment and indignation of the Prince who now made up his mind to take the field in person.* Nand Lal, Private Secretary to the Prince, was, however, a follower of the Guru. He spoke to the Prince in glowing terms of the great virtues and lofty character of the Sikh leader, and prevailed upon him to give up all idea of molesting the holy man.

The Guru thus escaped without any harm but the Rajas were taught a severe lesson by Mirza Beg, the imperial general. He inflicted upon them defeat after defeat, gave up their country to plunder, set fire to villages, took hundreds of prisoners, and in order to make a lesson of them had them shaved clean, and their faces blackened, seated them on donkeys and made an exhibition of them throughout the disturbed area. Having received such a severe lesson from the imperial troops, the Rajas found out that it was too difficult and too dangerous to provoke the wrath of Aurangzeb and defy his authority. They were extremely demoralised and gave up all hope of fighting their way out to freedom. They paid their arrears into the royal treasury and made abject apologies for their deviation from the path of loyalty.

The Guru, thanks to the diplomacy of Nand Lal, had got some recess during which he recouped his power and strengthened his resources. He appealed to the Rajas again to gird up their loins, and strike a blow for their national freedom, but the lesson they had lately been taught by Mirza Beg was yet too fresh in their minds. They refused to listen to the Guru's counsels and remained unshaken in their allegiance to the Government of Delhi. The Guru renewed the same tactics and once more let loose his followers upon their territories. The result was that the Sikhs began to carry fire and sword into their possessions, and carried away everything they could lay their hands upon. The Rajas were

* See Cunningham, p. 76 (note), and Panth Prakash.

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exasperated once more, and formed a second coalition against the Guru, and attacked him with a force of twenty thousand soldiers. The Guru had only 8,000 men in the fort of Anandpur at the time but he succeeded in repulsing the combined forces of the Rajas with great slaughter.* The Rajas were now helpless and began to despair of thmeselves. They prepared a memorial and sent it to the emperor stating in most abject and piteous terms that the Guru had adopted the royal insignia and called himself the true king, that thousands of fanatical followers were daily flocking to his flag, that they themselves had failed to break his power, and that, elated with victory, he was daily growing more insolent and dangerous, that he defied the authority of His Imperial Majesty and was encouraging his ignorant followers by holding forth to them the hopes that time was coming when His Majesty's government would fall to the dust and the Khalsa would be the supreme ruler in the land. The emperor was alarmed to receive this petition, and at once issued orders to the governor of Sirhind to take the field personally against the Guru and teach him a severe lesson. The Governor of Sirhind, consequently, attacked the Guru with a large force and the allied armies of the Rajas also joined in the attack.† The Guru summoned all his resources and came out to meet the advancing army. A great battle was fought at Kirtipur in 1701 A. D. The Guru's troops behaved like heroes and fought most desperately, but they were fighting against fearful odds. After two days of desperate fighting the Sikhs were driven back, and the Guru had to take refuge in the fort of Anandpur where he shut

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* The Guru had taken possession of a considerable part of the hill territories and his sway extended in the plains up to Ropar.

† Buti Shah says that 22 Rajas joined the Governors of Sirhind and Lahore in the attack upon the Guru.

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himself up. The imperial army laid siege to the fort and cut off all communication from without.*

Khawaja Muhammad and Nahar Khan, the commanders of the imperial troops, sent a messenger to the Guru, reminding him that he had not the paltry and undisciplined troops of petty hill-chiefs to contend with, but was pitted against the invincible armies of the great Moghul, "the King of Kings, the asylum of the poor, the protector of the world, Alamgir Aurangzeb," that it was madness for him to attempt impossibilities, that it would be better for him to cease hostilities, make immediate submission, renounce his infidelity and embrace the Islamic faith.

The Guru's youthful son Ajit Singh, who sat by, drew his scimitar and exclaimed in a rage to the bearer of the message "Utter one word more and I will smite your head from your body and cut you to pieces, for daring to address our chief with such insolence."† Needless to say that the blood of the envoy boiled with rage, and he returned to the imperial camp with this defiance.

The Guru was fighting for a principle and those who fight for principles do not measure the chances of success or failure. Submission to the Moghul army would have meant the submission of high principles to brute force, and the acquiescence of the Guru to the perpetuation of his nation's slavery. The Guru therefore did not think it necessary to contradict his son and conciliate the tyrant's envoy. He shut himself up in the fort and kept up a defensive attitude returning the enemy's fire from the guns which he had

* Panth Prakash gives an account of several other battles with the imperial troops which the Guru won before being driven to straits in the fortress of Anandpur Makhowal.

† According to Cunningham and Latif this incident occurred at Chamkaur, but I think the Panth Prakash is right in putting it at Anandpur. The nature of the struggle at Chamkaur hardly admitted of any negotiations.

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mounted on the walls of the fortress,* The siege continued without the least relaxation in the vigilance of the besiegers. The provisions soon began to run short and the garrison began to implore the Guru to make his submission for the time being, retire safely to a position of advantage and after recouping his resources resume hostilities with greater activity and success. The imperialists had promised safe conduct in case of capitulation and the Sikhs who were already dying of hunger entreated the Guru to avail of this offer of the besiegers. The Guru made the same reply to them. He told them how degrading it would be to submit to the Malechhas, and tried to encourage them in every way. The tyrants, moreover, he said, seldom keep their promises, and the Khalsa had given them too much provocation to expect any generosity at their hands, and if they surrendered the fort they would fall by the swords of the Moghuls. He entreated his Sikhs to trust in him and in God, and there would be every chance of their being reinforced and of repulsing the imperialists from their doors. To convince his followers of the hollowness of Moghul promises he ordered some rags, broken saddles, old shoes and such other things to be packed up in bundles and carried out on mules and pack-horses to make a show that the Sikhs were retiring with their baggage. As soon as the Moghul army saw the cavalcade they fell upon it and carried away every packet that they could lay their hands upon.† The Sikhs were overwhelmed with despair, and finding the agonising death by starvation staring them in the face, sought refuge in desertion. The Guru was soon left with only 45 of his most faithful followers.‡

* Two of the guns used in this siege by the Guru are preserved in the Lahore Museum.

† Ms. Brit Museum. Or. 187.

‡ The Guru has left on record a powerful curse pronounced by him on the deserters. These deserters when they reached their homes in the plains

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They waited and waited, but it seems that the Sikhs outside were either too terror-stricken or had no leader to organise them and bring them to the aid of the besieged. The provisions in the meantime were totally exhausted and the Guru had now no alternative but to leave the fort at any risk. Taking advantage of the dark night the Guru left the fort with his family and the little devoted band of his followers, and made the best of his way to the fortress of Chamkaur. Alarm was, however, soon raised and a detachment headed by Khawja Muhammad and Nahar Khan themselves pursued the Guru to that fortress. "The devoted little band fought to the last. The two eldest sons of the Guru, Ajit Singh and Jojhar Singh, with their mother Sundari, were slain before his eyes. The Guru himself behaved with great bravery, killing with his own hand Nahar Khan, and wounding the other Khawja Muhammad."* The struggle though short must have been terrible. Of the forty-five disciples who had accompanied the Guru only five succeeded besides himself in gaining entrance into the fortress† where they shut themselves up. But the place could not be expected to give them a safe refuge for any long time. It was after all a brick-built small fortress and could be easily destroyed or set on fire. Fatigued and hungry as the Guru and his five surviving Sikhs were, they resolved upon a desperate course, and when the Moghuls were yet busy in disposing of their dead, the Guru caused a hole to be made in one of the walls and in the darkness of the night he and his five followers escaped one by one running

were severely punished by the Government. The Guru utilised this fact for a homily on loyalty to one's spiritual guide. See *Vichitra Natak*, Chapter XIII.

* Latif, p. 265.

† According to Latif and Cunningham the battle took place after the Guru had shut himself up in the fortress. The story of Panth Prakash, given in the text, seems, however, to be more probable, *viz.*, that the Guru was overtaken before affecting his entrance into the fortress.

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in different directions.* The Guru now made the best of his way to the neighbouring woods, and passed the day in the forest, and set out again at night on his weary wandering. He reached the small town of Machhiwara towards the morning and hid himself in a big garden in the east of the town. The garden belonged to two Rohilla Pathans, named Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan. They suddenly turned up there and were struck with amazement and terror on finding Govind Singh on their land. Their cupidity was aroused and for a moment they thought of winning wealth and honour by betraying him to the Government. But the Guru had several times purchased horses from them and had always treated them with the greatest kindness. Humanity and gratitude soon prevailed and they took the Guru under their protection. The Guru changed his dress and assumed the disguise of a Muhammadan Saint, while Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan declared that he was their Pir and was on a visit to them from the celebrated shrine of Uchch.†

The Guru next took shelter with Qazi Pir Muhammad of Saloh with whom he had read Persian and studied the Qoran in his earlier days, and three of the Sikhs who had escaped with him from the fortress of Chamkaur and had been wandering in Muhammadan garb in anxious search of the Guru, also came up and were rejoiced to find their Guru alive and in safe hands. But the Guru knew that he could not wait there long with safety, and as soon as his Sikhs arrived he made up his mind to start for Malwa. To make

* The author of the Panth Prakash says that the Guru ordered four of his followers to remain in the fortress and keep up a constant fire from their muskets to beguile the Moghuls while the Guru escaped with two or three faithful followers. The fortress was taken the following morning and the four Sikhs left in charge of it fell sword in hand fighting to the last man.

† The Pirs of Uchch in the district of Multan keep long beards and do not cut their hair, so that the Guru with his hair down must have made an ideal Pir.

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the disguise complete he seated himself in an improvised palanquin like the Pirs of Uchch, which his followers carried on their shoulders, and set out for the province of Malwa. They had not gone far when the enemy's soldiers were upon them. Resistance was out of the question. Safety lay in diplomacy, and the palki-bearers, when seized and questioned, coolly said that they were the servants of the Pir Sahib who was on a tour visiting his followers. Rumours had got afloat that Govind was in hiding in Muhammadan disguise, but the Pirs of Uchch were held in such reverence and awe, that the very possibility of their captive's identity with one of them proved the safety of Govind. The commander of the Moghul band, however, insisted that if the occupant of the palanquin was really the Pir of Uchch, he should condescend to dine with him and confer upon him the merit of having entertained such a great saint. The Guru readily declared his willingness, and, according to some accounts, dined on the same table with his Muhammadan captors.*

After this hair-breadth escape the Guru left for Malwa.† He was pursued and overtaken in the midst of the barren desert lying around the town of Muktsar. Some of his followers had, however, rallied round him and the Moghul Army distressed by heat and scarcity of water was compelled

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* This is Cunningham's version and Kanahya Lal agrees with him. Syed Muhammad Latif, however, makes no mention of it, and the author of Panth Prakash while saying that his Sikhs dined with the Moslems, does not make it clear if the Guru also joined them. One account (MS. Or. 187) says that the Sikhs declared that their Pir was fasting and did not take anything but a grain of barley morning and evening. Some say that the Sikhs purified their food by touching it with a dagger, others that they read a text from the Granth before they partook of it.

† Malwa here does not refer to the country generally and properly called by this name. In the Punjab the name is applied to the district of Ferozepore and a part of the Sikh State of Patiala.

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to retire.* In commemoration of the Sikhs who fell in this action, the Guru built a tank there and called it Muktsar or the tank of salvation from which the present town of Muktsar derives its name.

The Guru had now lost all his children and was in a state of great dejection. The armies of Aurangzeb, moreover, were too vigilant and active to allow any scope for the realisation of his great aims. Consequently he established himself at a place half-way between Hansee and Ferozepore which he called Damdama or a breathing place and stopped there for about a year passing his time in teaching his followers and compiling the Dasam Granth. While here, he received a letter from Aurangzeb requiring his presence at Delhi. He replied in a long epistle couched in spirited Persian verse stating all the wrongs that had been done to him and justifying his recourse to the sword as the ultimate remedy.† It seems that Aurangzeb, in his letter to the Guru, had sworn by the Qoran to treat him honourably, but the Guru tells him plainly in his reply that he does not care a rap for the wily Moghul's oaths. Govind also rebuked the Emperor for his bigotry and oppression and threatened him with the vengeance which the Khalsa would one day take upon him. Aurangzeb summoned him once more, and according to some historians the Guru had set out

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* Latif, following Macgregor probably, puts the Guru's army at 12,000 and the Moghul army at 7,000. Panth Prakash, as well as Sohan Lal says only about forty men fought on the Guru's side, and this seems to be the truth, as otherwise the Guru would not have retired from military life with such a large army at his disposal and after such a great victory.

† A line in the epistle says.—

Chu kar az hamah hilate dar guzasht,
Halal ast burdan ba shamshir dast.

"When all remedies have failed, it is lawful to lay one's hand on the sword."
These remedies unfortunately were not many in Aurangzeb's time, there being no recognised system of ventilating popular grievances.

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to meet him when the aged monarch died. After Aurangzeb's death, Bahadur Shah is said to have conferred upon him a command in the imperial army and according to Cunningham, Latif and Panth Prakash, &c.,* he actually accompanied the emperor to the Deccan.† The Guru passed his time in peace in the Deccan until he was stabbed by his two Pathan proteges whose father‡ had been killed by him.

The boys were caught but pardoned, as the Guru said that they also had after all simply tried to revenge their father's death.§ His wound was sewn up and he recovered but shortly after while he was testing a strong bow it burst open again. The Guru bled profusely and died at Naderh, a town on the Godavari, now called Abchalanagar, towards the end of 1708 A. D. His dying injunctions to his

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* Munshi Sohan Lal also supports this view. All these authorities seem to have followed Khafi Khan.

† Buti Shah says that Govind went to the Deccan because he was dejected and probably wanted a change, and Malcolm holds the same view. Trumpp is uncertain and Kanahya Lal makes no mention of the service. The words of Malcolm are very suggestive. "When we consider," says he, "the enthusiastic ardour of his mind, his active habits, his valour and the insatiable thirst of revenge which he had cherished through life against the murderers of his father and the oppressors of his sect, we cannot think, when that leading passion of his mind must have been increased by the massacre of his children and the death and mutilation of his most attached followers, that he would have remained inactive, much less that he would have sunk into a servant of that Government against which he had been in constant rebellion. Nor is it likely that such a leader as Guru Govind could ever have been trusted by a Muhammadan prince." Nor can the service theory be reconcilled with the Guru's commission of Bunda to the leadership of the Punjab and his doings there.

‡ Cunningham, Macgregor and several others give this version. Trumpp following *Sikhan de Raj di Vithya* says one of the boys was a grandson of Payanda killed by Govind's grandfather. The priests at Naderh told the same story to Cunningham.

§ It is not difficult to conceive how the Guru must have envied the Pathan boys' luck. His own father's death practically still remained unavenged.

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followers were to be firm and resolute. He assured them that wherever five Sikhs would be assembled there he would himself be. "I founded the Panth," says he, "as I was ordered by the Almighty. Let all Sikhs regard the Granth as the Guru. Look upon the Granth as the person of the living Guru. Those whose hearts are pure will find the Guru in his word."

Though he did not live to see his high aims accomplished Guru Govind's labours were not lost. Though he did not actually break the shackles that bound his nation he had set their souls free, and filled their hearts with a lofty longing for freedom and ascendancy. He had broken the charm of sanctity attached to the Lord of Delhi,* and destroyed the awe and terror inspired by the Moslem tyranny. Govind had seen what was yet vital in the Hindu race "and he relumed it with Promethean fire." He had taken up sparrows and had taught them to hunt down imperial falcons. He was the first Indian leader who taught democratical principles and made his followers regard each other as Bhai or brother, and act by Gurmata or general counsels. He taught them to regard themselves as the chosen of the Lord, destined to crush tyranny and oppression, and look upon themselves as the future rulers of their land. He did not appoint any successor, not only because his own sons were all dead, but because perhaps he anticipated the abuses of the office if it fell into unworthy hands. He put an end to apostolic succession and, as stated above, enjoined upon his Sikhs to look upon the Granth as their only Guru in the future. He had, however, chosen one Banda Bairagi to carry on his work as a temporal leader, and we must now follow the fortunes of the Khalsa under the leadership of this great man.

* Ishwaro va Dillishwaro va, "the Lord of Delhi is as great as God" had long been a maxim with the terrified Hindus.

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CHAPTER XII.

SIKH CONQUESTS UNDER BANDA (1708-1716).

Banda was born in 1670 A. D. at Rajowri, a village in the little hill State of Poonch, a feudatory of His Highness of Jammu and Kashmir. His original name was Lachhman Dev. His father's name was Ram Dev and he was a Rajput of the Dogra tribe. In his earlier days Lachhman Dev was very fond of hunting, but one day he killed a doe, and as he cut her open, two little cubs came out alive and breathed their last in a few minutes before his very eyes. Lachhman Dev was so touched with the sight that he not only gave up hunting but renounced the world, became a Bairagi receiving the new name of Madho Das*, and joined a party of Sadhus and set off with them on a tour of pilgrimage. In course of time he attained great fame for his learning, piety and miraculous powers with which the people of those days readily invested anyone endowed with extraordinary attainments like Banda. He now ceased wandering and settled in princely fashion in the little quiet village of Naderh situated on the banks of the Godawari.

It was here that the meeting between him and Guru Govind Singh took place in 1708 A.D. The Guru, while travelling in the Deccan, happened to halt at Naderh, and hearing great praises of the ascetic went to see him. He at once found out what stuff the Bairagi was made of, and the Guru fixed upon him as the future leader of the Khalsa who would carry out his great designs. An intimate friendship soon grew up between them, and the persuasive eloquence

* Although Banda's military operations against the Moghul Government were so serious that the Emperor had to take the field against him in person, the accounts of his doings given by English Historians are extremely meagre. I have therefore dwelt upon his achievements at greater length than might seem necessary for the purposes of this work.

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and religious zeal of the Guru made such a deep impression on the mind of Madho Das that he became a disciple of the Guru, called himself his *banda* or slave, and threw himself entirely at his service. The Guru was exceedingly pleased at this triumph and at once accepted the offer of Madho Das's services. The Guru had told him all about his aims and ambitions, his sufferings and disasters. He now appealed to his new disciple to take up his work, avenge the blood of his father and his innocent children, and strike a blow at the Moghul despotism and emancipate his race from the yoke of thraldom.

He gave him a sword and five arrows from his own quiver and enjoined upon him the following five commandments :—

(1) Do not approach a woman, but lead a life of chastity and celibacy.*

(2) Always think the truth, speak the truth and act the truth.

(3) Regard yourself as a servant of the Khalsa and always act in accordance with its wishes.

(4) Do not try to found any sect of your own.

(5) Do not let victories elate you or kingly pride turn your head.

Banda received the sword and arrows with profound reverence and solemnly promised to obey the commands of the Guru. The Guru gave him a letter addressed to all the Sikhs of the Punjab calling upon them to acknowledge

* The Guru attached great importance to a continent life which he had himself adopted before entering upon his warlike career. His second wife, Sahib Devan, showed an anxiety for a child but the Guru consoled her by saying that the whole Khalsa would be as a child unto her. Every convert accordingly is told at the time of baptism that henceforth his caste will be Sodhi, (Govind's caste) and his parents Govind Singh and Sahib Devan.

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Banda as their leader and fight under his flag. He also gave him a drum and a banner of his own, and putting twenty-five of his chosen followers at his service he sent him to the Punjab to carry on the work which he had undertaken and left unaccomplished.

When Banda reached the Punjab, thousands of Sikhs flocked to him, ready to fight and die under his banner.* The army which now assembled under the command of Banda consisted of three classes of persons.

The first class comprised the true and loyal Sikhs who had sat at the feet of Guru Govind himself and had been touched by the Promethean fire which animated the great pontiff himself. They rallied round Banda in a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice to carry on the crusade against the enemies of their race and religion. They had no booty, no self-aggrandisement, as their object, on the contrary, hundreds sold all their little belongings, purchased arms, and flocked to the new leader with a fixed determination either to win the fight or to suffer martyrdom.

The second class consisted of mercenaries who had been recruited and sent on to Banda by such chieftains, as Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the Phool family, who, not being quite sanguine about the success of the new movement, did not like to run the risk of losing court favour and their possessions, and could not venture to join personally the army of Banda. They secretly paid for the arms and accoutrements of large bodies of troops and keeping themselves in the background continued to help the movement in a clandestine way.

The third class was entirely composed of the irregulars who were attracted to Banda by the love of booty and plunder.

* According to Muhammad Qasim and Khafi Khan people believed Banda to be an incarnation of Guru Govind Singh.

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They were professional robbers and dacoits, men of reckless daring, who hailed the movement as a golden opportunity offering prospects of plundering cities and towns instead of solitary wayfarers or caravans of merchants.

By the time Banda reached the precincts of Sarhind, he had collected a large army.* His first object was to take and destroy that town to avenge the blood of the infant sons of Guru Govind Singh who had been brutally put to death there.

When he arrived at the town of Kythal report was brought him that a large amount of treasure was being taken to Delhi and that the guard in charge of the treasure had halted at the village of Bhoona. He at once fell upon them, cut them to pieces and carried away every farthing of the money, the whole of which was at once distributed among his troops to their great joy and encouragement. The town of Kythal was given to plunder after which Banda advanced upon Samana, the native village of Jalal-ud-Din, the executioner, by whom Tegh Bahadur had been put to death. The town was looted and Muhammadans to the number of 10,000 were put to death.† The towns of Ghuram, Thaska, Ambala, Kunjpur, Mustafabad and Kapuri‡ were plundered, and Moslem officers punished for their tyranny and oppression. Sadhowra was the next to fall. The Moslems of the town took refuge in the mansion of the Syeds but Banda gave them no quarters and all were mercilessly put to the sword. The

* According to Khafi Khan in 2 or 3 months 4,000 horsemen and seven or eight thousand foot joined him and their number soon reached 8 or 9 thousand and rose at last to 40,000.

† *Banda Bahadur.*

‡ Kapuri is a village four miles from Sadhowra in the Amballa district. The Hakim of this place was a tyrant and libertine of the worst type. There was hardly a family in the town whose honour had not been destroyed by his lust. His name was Kadam-ud-Din Khan.

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place still exists and is known as *Qatlgarhi* or the Slaughter House. Banda next took possession of the fort of Mukhlispur and named it *Lohgarh*. Chhat and Banur, the Moslems of which attracted Banda's notice by their bigotry and slaughter of cows, were the next to fall and their Moslem inhabitants were as usual put to the sword.

Small as these victories were they served to encourage the followers of Banda and attracted thousands to his flag by the time he advanced upon Sarhind. It was here that the infant sons of the Guru had been brutally done to death, and the place represented to the minds of the Sikhs all that was mean and hateful, and the faithful followers of Govind burnt with longing for an opportunity to wreak their vengeance upon the murderous town. It was looked upon as a sacred duty to take part in the coming battle of Sarhind, and the desire for martyrdom had brought thousands from Majha and Malwa to join in the attack. Thousands had also been attracted by the prospect of plunder, as Sarhind, being the headquarters of the province of that name, promised to provide a rich booty to the victors.

The famous battle was fought on the 30th of May 1710 A. D.* Wazir Khan, the Governor, assisted by Sher Muhammad and Khawja Ali of Maler Kotla led his troops in person. He had a number of field guns, Zamburaks and a long line of elephants. Banda, on the other hand, had no guns or elephants and not even a sufficient supply of good horses. As soon as the battle began and the Moghul artillery opened fire, the dacoits and robbers whom the love of booty had brought together took to their heels, leaving the faithful Sikhs alone to fight out the battle. Fateh Singh, Karm Singh, Dharm Singh and Ali Singh commanded the contingent from Malwa and Baj Singh and Binod Singh led those

* Khafi Khan gives a detailed and vivid account of the battle.

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of Majha. Banda himself fought like a true Rajput in the forefront of his army. Religious zeal triumphed over the cannon and superior numbers of the Moghuls. Wazir Khan himself was slain with his Diwan. The city was given to plunder and the Muhammadans were ruthlessly massacred without any distinction of sex or age.*

The plunder of Sarhind continued for three days. On the fourth day it was stopped by order. Baj Singh†, the commander of Majha Singhs was appointed Governor of Sarhind with Ali Singh, the leader of Malwa Singhs, as his Naib.

Fateh Singh was appointed Governor of Samana and Ram Singh, a brother of Baj Singh, the Governor of Thaneswar jointly with Baba Binod Singh. The Moslem Hakims of all the 28 Parganas of Sarhind were replaced by Hindus and most of the country between the Sutlej and the Jamuna passed into the hands of the Sikhs.

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* They butchered, bayoneted, strangled, hanged, shot down, hacked to pieces and burnt alive every Muhammadan in the place. Nor was this all. The dead, too, were made to contribute their share towards gratifying the rage of these voracious vampires. . . The sanctity of the graveyard was violated, and corpses were exhumed, hewn to pieces and exposed as carrion, &c." Latif's History of the Punjab.

This seems to be much exaggerated. The mausoleum of Ahmad Shah, the most magnificent of all such buildings, still stands as it did before the battle and is I think sufficient evidence of the exaggeration in Latif's statement above, which nevertheless, is corroborated by Khafi Khan who adds that even wombs of pregnant women were ripped open and babies cut to pieces.

† Baj Singh, a jat of Ball caste and a native of Mir Pur Patti in Amritsar (?) district, was a disciple of Govind Singh whom he had accompanied to the Deccan. He was one of those sent by Govind as Councillors with Banda. He accompanied Banda throughout his wars with his brothers Ram Singh, Sham Singh and Kuber Singh and lastly he was one of those who suffered martyrdom with Banda at Delhi in 1716 A.D. His name is mentioned by Muhammad Qasim as Baz Singh. See Ibrat Nama; f. 29. In Tarikhi-Muhamad Shahi he is called Bakht Singh.

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Banda was now looked upon as the champion of Hinduism* and marched eastward on receiving a complaint from the Hindus of Dev Band who were being cruelly treated by Jalal-ud-Din, the Hakim of Jalalabad.† He fell upon Saharanpur‡ which was deserted by its Hakim, Ali Muhammad, and was sacked by the Sikhs. His attention was next drawn to Behat,§ the Peerzadas of which seemed to take particular pleasure in slaughtering the cows. Needless to say that the place was looted and the family holding the town destroyed. Before the Sikhs reached Jalalabad they reduced every town and village that fell on the way, most important of which were Ambeta and Nanauta. An account of the battle of Nanauta is reproduced in the Calcutta Review‖ from the diary of one Muhammad Zafar-ud-Din who was an eye-witness to the whole affair. Three hundred Shaikhzadas were killed in one quarter of the town which was reduced to ruins and is still known as "Phoota Shahr" or the Ruined Town.¶ Jallalabad was reached next and was besieged. The Afghans fought bravely and the rainy season having set in and the country around being exhausted, Banda gave up the siege.** He next took Karnal and reduced the whole country up to

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* He believed himself and was regarded by the Hindus as the scourage of Muhammadans sent by God to punish them for their crimes. Oppressed Hindus resorted to him for help which was willingly and efficiently given, a fact which had a great influence in promoting the growth of the Sikh power. The slayers of kine were given no quarters and this alone was sufficient to win over the sympathies of the whole Hindu race. His innovations might also be ascribed to the same motive.

† Twenty miles from Saharanpur, now in Muzzaffarnagar Distt.

‡ Spelt Sarangpur by Khafi Khan.

§ 17 miles from Saharanpur.

‖ Vol. LX.—The date of the battle according to the diary was July 11, 1710, A.D. (See Banda Bahadur).

¶ Banda Bahadur.

** Khafi Khan says Banda went to Sultanpore after this.

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Panipat.* The Sikhs were now in the province of Delhi proper and the reports of their ravages were daily pouring in from all sides. They were now supreme from Sarhind to Panipat and "there was no nobleman daring enough to march from Delhi against them. Nizam-ul-Mulk Asif-ud-Daula Asad Khan,† the Governor of the Capital, was greatly alarmed and behaved in a most pusillanimous manner, and the inhabitants were seized with terror and fled for shelter with their families to the eastern provinces."‡

The Emperor was away. The generals and noblemen were all afraid of Banda. The road from Panipat to Delhi lay open but somehow the Sikhs did not venture further.§ It might have been due to their fear of the Emperor who had been alarmed by the reports‖ of the Sikh aggressions and was hastening back.¶ The emperor did not even enter his capital to take breath after his southern successes but marched straight on towards Sarhind to punish the Sikhs. The vanguard of the Imperial army led by Mahabat Khan Sipahsalar, and Feroz Khan Mewati** came into collision with the troops of Ram Singh and Binod Singh, the deputies of Banda in Thaneswar and Trawari. A battle was fought

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* Risala-i-Nanak Shah.

† He simply wrote alarming letters to the King who was away reducing the Rajputs.

‡ Iradat Khan, as quoted by Latif.

§ Gyan Singh, the author of Panth Prakash, laments the laziness of the Sikhs in not attacking Delhi which seemed at this time to be an easy prey.

‖ Sent by Asad Khan from Delhi and by various *Waqa Nawises, e.g.*, Taj Din Diwan Buotat, Hafiz Khan Diwan, Hasan Riza Kotwal, Fakhar-ud-Din Bakshi, Muhammad Tahir and Darwesh Muhammad Qazi—*Tarikhi Md. Shahi.*

¶ Thousands who had suffered at the hands of Banda waited upon the king at Ajmer telling their piteous tales. "If Bahadur Shah had not quitted the Dekhan which he did in 1710 there is reason to think the whole of Hindustan would have been subdued by these merciless invaders." Malcolm.

** According to Kafi Khan, Muhammad Amin Khan and Rustamdil Khan assisted by Churamani Jat.

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on the 10th of November 1710 A. D. at Aminabad, a village situated on the royal road, between Thaneswar and Trawari. The Sikhs were defeated with great slaughter. Even the wounded and the dying were not spared and were hanged by their hair* on the trees with other prisoners of war. The arrival of the Imperial troops had once more inspired the demoralised Moghul Governors with courage. Shams Khan, the Foujdar or Governor of Jullundhar Doab, who had fallen upon a section of the Sikh army with a fanatical army of one hundred thousand, defeated them at Rahon, near Sultanpore. (Khafi Khan).†

Banda took up his position in the fort of Lohgarh‡ which stood on a steep hill a few miles from Sadhoura.§ The fort was besieged by the Imperial army under the direct

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* Muhammad Qasim—*Ibrat-Nama* and *Tarikh-i-Farrukh Siyar.*

† In "*Banda Bahadur*," published by Chief Khalsa Diwan, Banda is represented as having taken no part personally in any of the battles fought after the fall of Sarhind. The reasons given for this view are, however, far from convincing in face of overwhelming evidence of contemporary writers confirming his presence in some battles. It does not, moreover, seem probable that Banda would sit enjoying himself in the fort of Lohgarh complacently watching the loss of Karnal. On the other hand it seems very unlikely that Banda should have been beaten by such men as Mahabat Khan or Feroz Khan at Amingarh or by Shams Khan at Rahon. It seems more reasonable to suppose that the Sikhs were taken by surprise and beaten at both places before Banda could arrive in time. They did not anticipate that the Emperor would return so hastily as he did. They despised the local officers as none had dared to stand in their way. They were therefore scattered all over the Punjab up to the Ravi and the hills and fighting in detachments were beaten by the imperialists.

‡ The Sikh name of Mukhlispore. Iradat Khan, followed by Latif and some others, calls it the fort of Daber. In Maasir-al-Umara (p. 515, Vol. II) it is called Lohgarh.

§ There is no trace of the fort now but its site is still marked by a mound on the hill surrounded by two mountain streams. The only other relic is a small pond on the top of the mound which is perhaps a remnant of the tank which formed the water supply of the garrison.—"*Banda Bahadur.*"

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command of the emperor who had joined the expedition with his four sons.* The following account of the siege given by Iradat Khan, who was an eye-witness of the whole scene will be found interesting :

"Shah Alam's orders to his Omerahs were to the effect that they were not to a attack the Sikhs in their strong posts, under any pretence, but were to use every means in their power to induce them to sally forth from the forts. After the contending parties had remained inactive for some days, Khan-i-Khanan sallied forth with a number of his troops to reconnoitre his adversary's position. When, however, he had arrived within cannon-shot of their position, the enemy opened fire on the royal troops, while their musketeers and archers who occupied some of the surrounding elevations, volleyed in their messages of death in quick succession.

The imperial troops could no longer be held in check. The order was given to advance to the attack. Khan-i-Khanan dismounted from his horse and led his troops on foot up the most difficult heights, driving the enemy from them with great slaughter. This scene passing within sight of the royal camps, the chiefs and soldiers, emulous of glory, waited not for orders, but hastened to join the attack in great numbers, while the emperor and the four princes who accompanied him were eager spectators of the whole scene. The imperial troops carried all before them, driving the enemy from the heights surrounding the fortress. The Sikhs were compelled to retreat to the central fort which had only narrow approaches, difficult of access to recommend it, without affording good means of resistance. The defenders fought desperately but would have been completely annihilated, had not the darkness of night given them a further

* "Following, in this, the example of Aurangzeb who towards the end of his reign appeared at the siege of every fort belonging to the Kafirs, in order to win merit in a religious war"—Iradat Khan.

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reprieve by rendering friends and foes undistinguishable to each other. The attack was renewed about dawn and the fort taken after a short struggle. The Sikh chieftain effected his escape during the night by a narrow path leading from the fort to the hills, which had escaped the general's notice, and retreated into the wildest parts of the snowy range of the Himalayas. The Guru (Banda) knew well how to disguise himself and so dexterous was he in this accomplishment, that his most intimate acquaintances were unable to recognise him when he wished to evade detection.* When he wished to be known he appeared as a prince in the richest and most showy garments. When secrecy was his object, he generally took the guise of a jogi or Sanniassi."†

To preclude the possibility of a pursuit Banda had accepted the loyal offer of a devoted servant, named Gulaboo‡ who bore an exact likeness to him in features, and had left him behind to personate him.§ Khan-i-Khanan entered the fort in triumph and was transported with joy to find "Banda" among the prisoners of war. He was, however, soon disillusioned to the emperor's great disappointment and indignation which led to the disgrace of the aged minister.‖

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* He seems to have been indeed as great an expert in this art as Sivaji himself and perhaps greater inasmuch as he was regarded by his followers as well as enemies a sorcerer who could fly into the air at will. Therefore when he was finally captured he was tied to a Mogbul nobleman and confined in an iron cage in which he was carried to Delhi.

† It is a free translation of Iradat Khan given in Latif's history.

‡ When he was taken prisoner, the emperor admired his devotion but did not spare his life.—Khafi Khan.

§ The only other instances of such heroic devotion are furnished by the history of the Rajputs. A nurse saved Rana Oodey Singh's life by making over her own son to the assassins and the Sardar of Jhalawar saved the life of Pratap by personating the prince in the battle of Haldighat, See Tod's Annals of Rajasthan.

‖ Although soon restored to favour, his grief had shattered his health and he died in the spring of 1711 A. D.—*Tarikh-i-Md. Shahi*.

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Banda had made his escape to Nahan and all attempts to capture him proved fruitless. After this victory the emperor passed some time at Sadhowra hunting in the lower hills. He was still there when Banda appeared again at Pathankot. Bayazid Khan, Governor of Jammoo, with his nephew Shams Khan, advanced to meet him, but they were defeated and both killed in the action.* The emperor now hastened towards Lahore and sent Muhammad Amin Khan and Rustam Dil Khan against the Sikh leader. The diplomatic Banda, however, again fled into the hills and was soon beyond the reach of the imperial generals. The emperor passed six or seven months peacefully in Lahore but he developed signs of insanity and died in February 1712.†

The death of the emperor was the signal for the usual struggles for the throne amongst the various claimants. These commotions favoured the cause of the Sikhs. Jahandar Shah, who succeeded, reigned for a few months and appointed Zabardast Khan, Governor of Lahore. Both were, however, incompetent to rule. Farrukhsiyar removed Jahandar from the throne and appointed Abdul Samad Diler Jang, Governor of Lahore.‡ The years 1712 and 1713 were most unfavourable to the Sikhs. Thousands had been captured and put to death and the year 1714 was visited by a deadly famine. In 1714 Banda again descended from the hills and fell upon the country round Batala and Kalanour.§

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* This battle was fought near Barhampur (Gurdaspur District) in the spring of 1711, three or four months after the siege of Lohgarh. According to Sair-ul-Mutakhireen Bayazid was Governor of Sarhind and was killed by a Sikh while praying in his own tent (page 402).

† He ordered all the dogs and donkeys of Lahore to be killed, and all Sadhoos and Faqirs to be expelled.

‡ According to the Sair, Abdul Samad was Governor of Kashmir when he received orders to undertake the expedition. The order was accompanied by a Sanad appointing his son, Zakariya, Governor of Lahore (p. 402).

§ In the Gurdaspore district. Akbar was crowned emperor in this town.

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The new Governor of Lahore and Muhammad Amin Khan were immediately sent after him, but he again retreated into the hills and eluded the imperial troops. About a year and a half passed in peace. Early in 1716, however, Banda suddenly fell upon Kalanour and Batala which had escaped his former depredations. Both the towns were now sacked and numbers of Muhammadans, including the famous family of Shaikh-ul-Ahmad, were put to death.

Farrukhsiyar was exasperated to hear the news of these fresh disasters. He sent strict orders to the Nazim of Lahore to destroy the power of Banda. Abdul Samad accordingly set out in pursuit of Banda with a large army of chosen warriors and a powerful artillery.*

Banda was defeated at Kot Mirza Jan near Kalanaur and was forced to retreat from post to post, fighting valiantly and inflicting heavy losses on his victors. He was at length compelled to shelter himself in the fort of Gurdaspore.† He was closely besieged; nothing could be conveyed to him from without; and after consuming all his provisions, and eating horses, asses and even the forbidden ox he was reduced to submit.‡ Some of the Sikhs were put to death and their

* He was assisted by the Hakims of Eminabad, Pasrur, Patti, Kalanaur, and Raja Bheem Singh of Katoch and Dhruva Deva of Jasrota. Ibrat Nama (Md. Qasim), f. 51.

† Cunningham says this fort was built by the Sikhs during the civil war between Farrukhsiyar and Jahandar Shah in 1712-13. Forster and Malcolm erroneously called this fort "Lohgarh" confounding it with Mukhlispore which is called Lohgarh in Sair-ul-Mutakhireen. "Banda Bahadur," however, makes no mention of this fort unless it be identical with the "Haveli" of Bhai Duni Chand in which Banda is said to have taken his shelter and from which he is said to have been captured. It is stated that Banda tried to build a fort at Kot Mirza Jan but the Moghul army came upon him before it was half completed. This seems to be the correct view as it is confirmed by Muhammad Qasim. See his Ibarat Nama, f. 51.

‡ Budh Singh's *Risala-i-Nanak Shah* states that, when pressed hard, Banda with his followers sallied forth from the fort, sword in hand, and was taken

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heads borne on pikes before Banda and others as they were marched to Delhi with all the signs of ignominy usual with bigots and current among barbarous or half-civilized conquerors.* The Muhammadan army dreaded Banda as a great sorcerer, and, to prevent his escape, they confined him in an iron cage chained with a Moghul officer who was to plunge his dagger into him if he attempted to fly.† He was brought to Delhi with 740 followers all in chains preceded by 2,000 Sikh heads on pikes.‡

"In order to give them a contemptible and ludicrous appearance they were forced to dress themselves in sheep skins and were then mounted on asses and camels and exhibited in all the thoroughfares and places of public resort of the city. Banda was placed on an elephant with his face smeared with black and a woollen cap placed over his head, and an executioner standing over him, sword in hand. He was made to take the lead, as their mock chief."§ One hundred of them were publicly beheaded every day until all but Banda were removed. "They met their doom with the utmost indifference; nay, they even clamoured for priority

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prisoner fighting. Banda's army, according to Qasim, was 10,000, out of which, according to Khafi Khan, 8,000 had died of hunger. The ox-eating theory must be ascribed to the bigotry of Khafi Khan. On the other hand, if it be based on facts it does not mean that Banda himself or any of his Hindu followers used the forbidden flesh. There must have been hundreds of scavengers and other low class camp followers in the fortress and Banda might have connived at their slaughter of some oxen to stave off the death by starvation.

* Cunningham based on the Sair, p. 403.

† The point is mentioned by McGregor. The Russian rebel Pugat Cheff was also put in an iron cage when arrested in 1774.

‡ Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, p. 180, gives 780 as the number of captives.

§ Latif.

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of martyrdom."* On the eighth day Banda himself was arraigned before his judges. "He was dragged from his cage like a wild beast and then dressed in a princely robe embroidered with gold and a scarlet turban. The heads of his followers, who had been previously executed were paraded on pikes all round him. The executioner with drawn sabre stood behind him in readiness to carry out the sentence of his judges. All the Omerahs of the court tauntingly asked him why he, a man of such unquestionable knowledge and abilities, had committed such outrageous offences. He retorted that he was a scourge in the hands of the Almighty for the chastisement of evil-doers and that power was now given to others to chastise him for his transgressions. His son was now placed in his lap, and he was ordered to cut his throat, a knife being handed to him for that purpose."† He did so, silent and unmoved; his own flesh was then torn with red hot pincers, and amid these torments he expired."‡

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* Latif, Malcolm, Cunningham, Khafi Khan, Sair, etc., etc. Some of the East India Company's agents were at that time in Delhi and witnessed the whole thing with their own eyes. See Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, page 180.

† Latif. According to some his son was murdered and his flesh thrown into Banda's face.

‡ Cunningham. *Banda Bahádur*, however, holds that Banda was dragged behind an elephant after these tortures and was thrown on the banks of the Jamna as dead to be devoured by wolves and jackals. A Faqir, however, finding some traces of life in him picked him up and nursed him till all his wounds were healed. Banda then fled to the Punjab in disguise. Conditions had, however, entirely changed in the meantime. The Sikhs were divided into two parties hostile to each other, one professing allegiance to Banda himself and the other, as Tatwa Khalsa, adhering to the original creed. An active persecution by Abdul Samad had struck terror into the hearts of the Sikhs and had driven them to the hills and forests and wastes of Bhatinda and Bikanir. Any organisation now seemed to be impossible. Banda took up his abode as a Sadhoo at Bhabbhar in the Jammoo hills. His first wife was with him when he was tortured and their son hacked to pieces before their eyes. She is said to have been coerced into Islam and sent on a forced pilgrimage to Mecca. He married again and had a

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Advance made under Banda.

It is of course undeniable that the man who brought about a revolution in the character of the Sikhs and breathed a new life into them was Govind Singh. But it may be said without any fear of contradiction that it was Banda who taught them first how to fight and conquer. Without the least disparagement to the extraordinary genius and military ability of the tenth Guru it may be pointed out that his activities were mainly confined to desultory warfare with the petty chiefs of the hill States and the first time he came into serious collision with the imperial troops he found the shock too great for him. His warfare may without any irreverence be called the rehearsal of the great drama which the Sikhs

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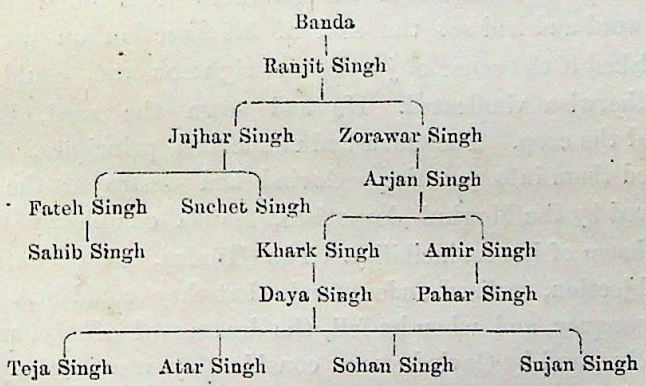
son Ranjit Singh in 1728. Banda died on the 14th of Jeth, 1798 Samvat, *i.e.*, in May 1741 A. D. His tomb is situated two or three miles from Bhabbhar. A fair is held there every year when thousands, who still follow Banda's descendants as their spiritual guides, assemble from all parts of the Punjab. The present (September 1907) incumbent of the Gaddi is Teja Singh. The genealogical tree of Banda's dynasty is as follows :—



The present incumbent and all his brothers are childless. Malcolm writing more than a century ago refers to the view stated above and even mentions *Bhabbhar* where Banda took his abode after escaping from Delhi. The story is also given in Panth Prakash. Nevertheless I am constrained to say that the story is not beyond all doubt, unless it be supposed that Banda escaped again from Gurdaspur and was never taken to Delhi at all.

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were to enact under the guidance of Banda. The plot was of the Guru's conception, actors were all prepared and trained by him, but it was Banda who brought them out and made them play as it were before the full House. Whereas the Guru's possessions had not even temporarily extended much beyond the confines of the hills, the whole country from Lahore to Panipat lay for once practically at Banda's feet.* His great successes gave Sikhism a prestige and a power which had never yet been associated with it. Those who had never heard the names of the Gurus were impressed with its grandeur by the victories of Banda and joined his ranks in thousands. His personal magnetism too was great, and his undaunted courage and extraordinary valour knit his followers closely to him.† The fact that not a single Sikh out of the thousands captured and murdered by the Moghul Government renounced his faith to save his life was no less due to the exemplary piety and lofty character of Banda than the inspiration of his predecessor. Guru Govind Singh had diverted the attention of his followers from the plough to the sword and had set the seal of his sanction on war and bloodshed if the cause of justice and righteousness could not be otherwise vindicated. He had sown the seed, Banda reaped the crop. The Guru had enunciated principles, Banda carried them into practice. Govind had destroyed the awe inspired by the Moghul despotism, Banda completely broke the charm of its invincibility. The Hindus, after centuries of subjection, realised under Banda that they could still fight and conquer, and when he fell, the dreams of Khalsa supremacy inspired by Govind were considerably nearer the point of realisation.

* Batches of Sikhs despatched by Banda had ransacked the whole country up to the Garden of Shalamar at Lahore.—Khafi Khan.

† Gulaboo the man who saved Banda's life by allowing himself to be captured in his place was at first a tobacconist in the Moghul army that invaded Lohgarh in 1710.—Khafi Khan.

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Still however Banda failed. The causes of his failure may be enumerated as follows :—

1. The vigorous rule of Farrukhsiyar.

Revolutions cannot raise their heads under strong rulers. Napoleon used to say that if Louis XVI had mowed down a few hundreds the very first day of the mob demonstration there would have been no such thing as the French Revolution.

Farrukhsiyar seems to have been a believer in the maxim "slay, slay and again slay." The settlement with the Rajputs had left him free to strengthen the central government and the strength of the central government spread to the provinces. The lazy and luxurious and demoralised Nazims became alert and energetic to keep pace with the emperor's activity. Such was at least Abdul Samad Khan who ruled in Lahore from 1714 to 1726 A. D. His precautionary measures and vigorous rule checked the power of Banda and put a permanent stop to his ambitions.

2. The second cause of Banda's failure, of course, lay in his own conduct. He was after all not a regular convert to Sikhism and had enjoyed spiritual leadership in his own limited sphere. He did not enter into the spirit of Sikhism as it had been modified by Guru Govind Singh. Its theocratic character he had grasped but he does not seem to have fully realised that Govind had given it a distinct individuality, and any efforts, howsoever laudable, to treat it otherwise would fail. He tried to tamper with it and modify it in such a way as to make it appear less sectarian and more nationalistic in its character. The general tone of its tenets and the protection of the cow which formed an outstanding feature of Banda's mission had rallied the Hindus to his banner. Still there seemed to be something exotic in Sikhism which in Banda's opinion detracted from its value as a lever for the uplifting of the Hindus. Accordingly he tried to

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give it a more decidedly Hinduistic tone by altering some of its distinctive institutions. (*a*) The long hair, the most prominent badge of Sikhism and most important under Govind ceased to remain an essential feature of Sikhism under Banda. (*b*) The eating of animal diet had been encouraged by Govind, but Banda, being a Vaishnava, discountenanced it and exhorted the Sikhs to refrain from it. (*c*) He substituted "Fateh Dharma, Fateh Darshan" instead of "Wah Guruji ka Khalsa, Wah Guruji ki fateh" which was certainly a very serious innovation. (*d*) Nor did Banda fully understand the democratical character of Sikhism. One of the fourfold advice given to Banda by Guru Govind Singh was to behold the Lord in the general body of the Khalsa and never to do anything without consulting the sense of the Khalsa. Banda acted upon this advice in the beginning but his successes made him indifferent to the opinion of the Khalsa. Panth Prakash states that Guru Govind's widow being won over by the Government was made to write a letter to Banda urging him to make his submission and give up fighting. He refused to comply with the letter. The lady then addressed a circular letter to all the true Sikhs to cease to have anything to do with the insolent innovator. This is said to have precipitated the breach between Banda's followers and the Tatwa Khalsa.*

Panth Prakash also says that the Sikhs were further weakened by certain conciliatory measures taken by Farrukhsiyar or his deputy in Lahore. Five hundred Sikhs who were disaffected towards Banda were taken into service on a rupee a day and the rest were pacified by the grant of *Jhabbal* near Amritsar, with a revenue of Rs. 5,000 to the Darbar Sahib at Amritsar. The conditions of this "treaty" were as follows :—

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* The chief Khalsa Diwan's Banda Bahadur rejects this view as spurious.

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1. The Khalsa shall refrain from committing depredations in the country.
2. The Khalsa shall not help Banda;
3. In case of a foreign invasion the Khalsa shall fight for the emperor.
4. There shall be no reduction in the pay or the jaghir of the Khalsa.
5. No Hindu shall be compelled to embrace Islam and no sacred place of the Hindus shall be destroyed or desecratad.
6. The Hindus shall not be treated harshly and their religious susceptibilities shall be respected.

All these circumstances combined to alienate the Tatwa Khalsa from Banda, and the relations between Banda and "Tatwa Khalsa," once strained, never became cordial again. Many faithful Sikhs left Banda's army, and one of their great leaders, Bhai Binod Singh Tehun, deserted Banda when he was reduced to straits in the fort of Gurdaspore. In fact Banda had never had the same whole-hearted support of the Sikhs after the conquest of Sirhind. The career of Banda which promised to be crowned with glorious success was thus cut short by his sacerdotal ambition, incomprehension of the true nature of Sikhism, the machinations of the Moghul Government and the demoralisation which for a time Farrukhsiyar's persecuting hand spread into the ranks of the Khalsa.

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CHAPTER XIII.

TEMPORARY SUPPRESSION OF THE SIKHS. (1716-1738).

The history of Sikhism from the fall of Banda to the permanent occupation of Lahore by the Sikhs in 1768 A. D. is a most chequered one. It is a record of the life-and-death struggle between the declining power of the Moghul and the rising state of the Khalsa, and the ups and downs of this part of Sikh history surpass in interest the record of the strivings of any other race after superiority.

This period of nearly fifty years can be divided into five epochs of nearly ten years each of them being marked by some important advance made by the Khalsa. The epochs extend from—

1. 1716-1724 A. D.
2. 1725-1738 A. D.
3. 1738-1748 A. D.
4. 1748-1758 A. D.
5. 1758-1768 A. D.

The defeat of Banda and the destruction of his army were followed by a period of reaction and persecution which for the time being proved most disastrous to the Sikhs. Divided at home* they were pressed from without so mercilessly

* Banda's followers had, during his ascendancy, taken possession of the Temple at Amritsar and of course appropriated all the income. This added to other causes of animosity detailed above, led to bitter hostilities. In 1725 the relations between the Khalsa and the Bandais had grown so strained that recourse was had to violence. It was only through the good offices of Bhai Mani Singh that civil war and bloodshed were prevented. Lottery was cast and the result was favourable to the Khalsa. The temple was restored to the Khalsa and Bandais were expelled. This occurred during the period of depression and is another proof of the weakened state of Govind's followers, for otherwise they would not have left what was theirs by right to the uncertain chances of a lottery.

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that for a time it seemed that the boast of Farrukhsiyar to destroy all trace of these infidels would be carried out to the letter. Hundreds fell victims every day to the bigotry and fanaticism of the Moghul rulers, and thousands, who had joined merely for the sake of booty, cut their hair, shaved their beards and joined the Hindu flock again. The true Sikhs fled to the jungles, hills and deserts of Rajputana and Bikanir. Prices were laid on their heads, and whenever one was caught or betrayed no mercy was shown to him. When a mother was asked how many children she had, she would very often say that she had four but one had become a Sikh. To be a Sikh was to be already among the dead. Those who had fled from the persecuting hand of the authorities dared not show their faces and passed their days in the greatest hardship. They lived on roots, fruits and green vegetables and even these were looked upon as great luxuries. Their wives and children were left to the tender mercies of the Moghuls and it was not a rare thing for the women to be taken prisoners, tortured and even put to death.*

It is usual with English historians to say that nothing was heard of the Sikhs for a generation, *i.e.*, from 1716 to 1738. It is true about the first eight years of this period, but certainly the Sikhs were not the people to remain quiet very long. For eight long years their internal dissensions and the powerful hand of Abdulsamad had been too strong

* The Emperor Muhammad Shah once desired his court actors to play a farce before him giving him an idea of the life of the Sikhs in exile. The farce is reproduced in the Panth Prakash and shows how the Sikhs consoled themselves during their homelessness and wanderings. They lived in great contentment calling the little luxuries of onions, fried grain and saltless vegetables by the most flattering names. They drank bhang and when they threw away the ball of the crushed leaves they likened it to a cannon ball hitting the Moghul in the heart. They beguiled their time by such songs as "Listen, O mother of the Moghuls, the Singhs thy sons-in-law are coming." "Listen, O sister of the Moghuls, thy jewels would be taken by the Singhs," etc.

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to allow them to take any effective steps. They had been silent sufferers all this time and regarded it a great victory to escape with their lives. The year 1724, however, was hardly over when they began to make their appearance again in the plains of the Punjab. They formed themselves into small bands and began their old tactics of harassing the Government by their plundering expeditions and guerrilla warfare. All English historians, as said above, are silent as to the doings of the Sikhs between 1716 and 1738. Ali-ud-Din's *Ibrat nama* and Gyan Singh's Panth Prakash, however, give some details of their exploits between 1724 and 1738.*

The first thing done by the reawakened Khalsa was to punish the traitors who had betrayed their brethren to the government and the petty tyrants who had like mean cowards vented their wrath upon their unprotected wives and children.

The fresh depredations of the Sikhs aroused the anger of the emperor against Abdulsamad. He was consequently transferred to Multan in 1726 and his son Zakriya Khan, known as "Khan Bahadur" was appointed governor of Lahore. A moving column was at the same time established to look after the Sikhs and prevent them from assembling anywhere in large numbers. This flying column acted energetically, chasing the Sikhs whenever they appeared, but the Sikhs were fast becoming strong and getting out of control. Collisions between the Moghul *hakims* and the Khalsa were becoming more frequent every day. Tara Singh of Dalawan (District Amritsar) defeated Jafar Beg of Patti. The Sikhs looted the treasure near Kanha Kachha (Lahore District) when it was being carried from Qasur to Lahore. The Royal merchant Murtaza Khan who supplied the emperor's horses was plundered the same year (1726) near Jandiala (Amritsar District).

* The Pers. Ms. "*Risala-i-Nanak Shah*" (No. 281 Etho's Bodleian) also throws some light on the subject.

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In 1730 the Sikhs fell upon the guards carrying treasure from Lahore to Delhi and carried away every pie of it. An army was sent from Delhi to chastise the robbers but the Sikhs at once fled to the hills. In 1731 they came down again and began to commit highway robberies practically at the very gates of Lahore. The Muhammadans of Lahore collected in large numbers and joined the Governor in a religious war upon the Sikhs and gained two victories over the Sikhs but were ultimately defeated near the city gates with great loss.* In 1733 an effort was again made to crush the Sikhs by concessions and bribes. Khan Bahadur recommended to the Government of Delhi the grant of a Jagir and title to the Sikhs. His suggestion was accepted and the offer of a Jagir of Rs. 100,000 and title of Nawab for their leader was sent to their representative† at Amritsar. The offer was at first rejected with scorn but better counsels prevailed and the jagir was accepted. No one, however, would come forward to accept the title and robes of honour. They were tossed from one man to the other until Kapur Singh a Jat of Faizullahpur who was moving the Pankha in the assembly gave his consent to be decorated with the title and robes of a Nawab.‡ The Sikhs now continued peacefully for sometime living upon the revenues of the new jagir.

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* Panth Prakash of Gyan Singh and Panth Prakash of Ratan Singh place this crusade in 1731. Muhammad Kasim in his Ibratnamah places it in 1710, so also Mufti Ali-ud-Din in his book of the same name. Khafi Khan and Latif, who follow him, agree with the authors of *Ibratnamahs*.

† The most important of these at this time were the following: Darbara Singh, Kapur Singh, Hari Singh Hazuri, Deep Singh Shahid, Jassa Singh, Ramgarhia, Karm Singh, Budha Singh Suker Chakia and Girja Singh, etc.—*Panth Prakash*.

‡ This Kapur Singh became one of the most powerful of the Sikh leaders and founded one of the twelve *Misls*, called Fyzulpuria after his native place. Syed Muhammad Latif gives a different origin of his title. "His followers" he says "who numbered thousands, gave him the title of Nawab, as a compliment to his genius, this being almost the only instance of a Sikh assuming

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In 1734, the Sikhs were divided for the sake of convenience into two groups according to the age of the members, one including the older and called *Budha-Dal*, and the other consisting of younger Sikhs called *Taruna-Dal*. The young Khalsa was further divided into five groups :—

(1) Commanded by Deep Singh Shahid.

(2) Under Prem Singh and Dharm Singh Khatris.

(3) Commanded by Daswandha Singh.

(4) Commanded by Baba Kahan Singh and Baba Binod Singh.

(5) Consisting of Mazhabi Sikhs under the command of their leaders Bir Singh and Amar Singh.

All of these various groups settled in the countryside round Amritsar. In 1735 the jagir being thought no longer necessary was confiscated.* The campaign of plunder and rapine was again opened by the Khalsa.

Lakhpat Rai, the Diwan of Lahore, was however soon upon them and the young Khalsa were driven beyond the Sutlej. In 1736, the old Khalsa and Nawab Kapur Singh who had not been behind their younger co-religionists in their depredations came in collision with Haibat Khan, one

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a Muhammadan title." Needless to say that Latif's theory is far less probable than the account given above which is according to the Panth Prakash.

Kapur Singh "converted a large number of people, jats, carpenters, weavers, Jhiwars, Khatris and others to the persuasion of Govind and the religious respect in which he was held was so great that initiation into the *pahul* of the Guru from his hands was considered a great distinction. He prided himself upon having killed 500 Muhammadans with his own hand..... He was certainly the most illustrious and most dreaded of Sikh Sardars before the days of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Ala Singh of Patiala.....He died in 1753 at Amritsar." Syod Muhammad Latif.

* Panth Prakash lays the blame on the Government for breach of contract, but it seems more probable that the Government was driven to take this step by the renewed energy of the Taruna Dal or the Young Army.

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of the Lahore generals, and were defeated in an action fought at Vasarki near Amritsar.

Both the armies now combined and defeated the Moghul army near *Hujra Shah Muqim*.

About two years more were passed in this desultory warfare which gradually strengthened the hands of the Khalsa and weakened the power of the Moghul Government. In the meantime circumstances had arisen which foreboded the ruin of the Moghul and paved the way for the ascendancy of the Khalsa.

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE SIKHS REAPPEAR AND BECOME A POWER.

(1738-1748).

The circumstances alluded to in the last chapter, which inspired new life into the Khalsa and encouraged them to make greater and more determined efforts, may be enumerated as follows :—

(*a*) The weakening of the central government at Delhi which was brought about by the following circumstances :—

(1) Luxuriousness and imbecility of Muhammad Shah* and his successors.

(2) The dissensions raging between the leading courtiers, who would rather see the empire going to the dogs than see a rival taking credit by saving it from ruin. The only sensible man at the court, *viz.*, Asaf Jah was

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* Poets, musicians, actors, buffoons and nautch girls took up more time of the Emperor than State affairs. One instance would suffice to show the depth of degradation reached by the Emperor and his courtiers. Nadir's letter was not answered for two years; he sent another while on his way to India. It was received by the Emperor when he was drinking with his courtiers. The Emperor took it and threw it into the wine quoting a line from Hafiz "Let this meaningless document be drowned in the sparkling wine."

The favourite Queen of Muhammad Shah was a Hindu dancing girl who afterwards became the mother of the heir-apparent and held the chief power when her son, Ahmad Shah, succeeded to the throne. The new Emperor himself was a true son of his parents. Having been brought up in the seraglio he had no experience of public business. He became absorbed in youthful pleasures, and gave up the whole of his time to pastimes, sport and debauchery, frivolities inherited by him on both sides. He extended his zenana (seraglio) so that it occupied a space of a mile. He lived in gardens for one or two months at a time, and would remain without seeing the face of any male being for a week together. Syed Muhammad Latif.

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ridiculed as dancing before the King like a monkey. "All right," said Asaf Jah, "I shall not be satisfied unless I see a monkey dancing at every turret and minaret of Delhi. True to his word it was he who invited Nadir Shah to Delhi and for the first time exposed the hollowness of the empire.

(3) The rising power of the Mahrattas and other States. "Within a generation, Muhammadan adventurers had established separate dominions in Bengal, Lucknow and Hyderabad; the Mahratta Peshwa had startled the Moslems of India by suddenly appearing in arms before the imperial city," in 1737, when Baji Rao made an incursion from Agra towards Delhi. The Rohillas in Rohelkhand and the Hindu Jats in Bhartpore had established independent kingdoms while the Rajputs had already practically thrown off the Moghul yoke.

(4) Invasion of Nadir Shah.

(5) The two invasions, 4th and 5th, of Ahmad Shah Durrani.

(*b*) The second circumstances which encouraged the Sikhs to rise, and contributed greatly to their strength was the weakness of the Lahore government. The weakness of the Delhi government might at first sight seem to have rather tended to the strength and independence of the Punjab government like that of Oudh, Bengal, Rohelkhand, etc., etc. But the Punjab being the favourite resort of the Moghul Emperors was under stronger control than any other province, and it so happened that all the governors except

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one were weak. Mir Mannu, who formed the exception, and was conscious of his strength and ability as having been the victor of Ahmad Shah Durrani, was the man to assert his independence of Delhi, and he did it, but his ambition was frustrated by the invasion of the Durrani and his own premature death.

The following circumstances contributed to the further weakness of the Lahore government :—

(1) Frequent change of governors and governments. From 1712 to 1768, when the Punjab passed permanently into the hands of the Sikhs, Lahore passed through the administration of twenty different governors. In ten years, from 1756 to 1767, seven revolutions took place in Lahore and twelve viceroys held the reins of government one after another.* The Moghul authority came to an end in 1756 with the third invasion of the Durrani. The Durrani's son ruled for a year and was turned out by Jassa Singh Kalal who was turned out within

* The name of the governors from 1712 to 1767 are stated below :—

1. Aslam Khan (Islam K.) ...
2. Zabardast Khan 1712
3. Abdul Samad Khan... ... 1714
4. Zakriya Khan, K. B. ... 1726
5. Yahya Khan 1743
6. Shahniwaz Khan 1746
7. Lakhpat Rai and Jumla Khan 1747
8. Mir Mannu 1748
9. Mir Mannu's widow and son 1752
10. Prince Tymoor and Jahan Khan 1756
11. Jassa Singh Kalal 1758
12. Mirza Khan (under the Mahrattas) 1758
13. Bapoo Rao Mahratta ... 1758
14. Haji Karim Dad Khan ... 1759
15. Sarbuland Khan 1761
16. Obed Khan 1761
17. Kabuli Mal 1762
18. Gujar Singh, Lahna Singh, Sobha Singh 1765
19. Dadan Khan... 1766
20. Gujar Singh, Lahna Singh, Sobha Singh 1767

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a year by the Mahrattas who were soon ejected by the Abdali whose deputies held Lahore for about three years when they were expelled by the Sikhs under Sobha Singh, Lahna Singh and Gujar Singh. They ruled Lahore for a year and were turned out again by the Abdali, but the Abdali's governor was deposed by the Sikhs again within a year.

(2) Jealousy and treachery of officials :—Jaspat Rai was the governor of Jullundur Doab when Zakriya Khan became governor of Lahore. He transferred Jaspat Rai to the minor Parganah of Eminabad and appointed Adeena Beg in his place. Adeena was a strong ruler and soon restored peace in his territory. He was frequently praised at the Court of Lahore to the great disappointment and chagrin of Jaspat Rai and his brother Lakhpat Rai, the Diwan of Lahore. The Khatri brothers stung by jealousy were always anxious to degrade their successful rival in the eyes of the governor. Jaspat Rai, therefore, instigated the Sikhs to create troubles in the Jullundur Doab in order to harass and exasperate Adeena Beg. Adeena, on the other hand, incited the peasantry of the Punjab, mostly Sikhs, to riot and rebellion."* Thus while the officials

* Ibrat Namah by Mufti Ali-ud-Din. Cunningham refers to the suspicion under which Adeena was held for alleged temporising with the peasantry for his own purposes which were supposed to be furthered by the continuance of Sikh disturbances. Budh Singh definitely attributed the prolonged disturbances caused by Sikhs to the connivance and even collusion of Adeena who wanted to keep them up to deter his rivals from attempting to oust him from the governorship of Jullundur Doab.—*Risala-i-Nanak Shah.*

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indulged in personal jealousies and tried to satisfy their private grudges, the Sikhs encouraged by all and fearing none went on progressing unchecked.

(3) Next came the invasion of Nadir and the inroads of the Durrani King. The Punjab was occupied by foreigners so many times, and every time they found it weaker and left it still more distracted and disorganised. Of the nine* invasions of Ahmad Shah seven were directed against the Punjab and created a confusion from which it never recovered until it passed into the hands of Ranjit Singh.

(c) The third cause of the uprising of the Khalsa was the execution of some of their noblest and holiest leaders. Mani Singh and Taru Singh commanded the highest respect of the Khalsa, and the former† as a companion of the last Guru was regarded with the greatest reverence throughout the Punjab. They were both arrested and put to death on flimsy charges of treason.

The history of the Sikhs from 1738 A.D., where we left it in the last chapter, up to the Sikh supremacy at Lahore falls into three equal periods of ten years, each marking an advanced stage in the political organisation of the Sikhs.

The misery and hardship suffered by the Sikhs from 1716 to 1738 under the persecuting hand of the Moghul government had already embittered their hearts against the

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* All historians mention only eight invasions of Ahmad Shah. Mufti Ali-ud-Din mentions the ninth during which the invader came up to *Jukalian* on the Chenab and went away suffering from cancer.

† Cunningham makes Taru Singh also an old companion of the Guru, (*History of Sikhs*, p. 91), but it seems very improbable.

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Government. They had lost no opportunity of taking their revenge and had already, as shown above, begun to harass the Government in all directions. But the executions of their great and universally revered leaders had set the fire of vengeance ablaze in their hearts and they longed for an opportunity to avenge the blood of the martyrs upon their merciless persecutors and extirpate the oppressors of their race.

The opportunity was afforded by the invasion of Nadir Shah who descended upon the plains of the Punjab in the early part of 1738. The confusion that ensued proved most favourable to the enterprise of the Sikhs. The Lahore government, faced by a more formidable foe, left the Sikhs to pursue their plans undisturbed. They had already formed themselves into bands of robbers and were scouring the country up and down. Now they threw up a fortress at Dullewal near Derah Baba Nanak, on the Ravi, east of Lahore. From this base of operations they issued in large numbers plundering the Muhammadan villages, government officials and even Hindus taking the side of the Muhammadan government. They did not spare the dreaded Nadir himself but fell upon the rear of his army laden with the spoils of Delhi and carried away whatever they could lay their hands upon. "Whence," demanded the imperious Nadir, "come those long-haired barbarians who dare to molest me? Destroy them and their homes." "Their homes are the saddles on their horses," was the reply.*

The Sikhs thus roamed unchecked for some time. The attention of the Government was, however, attracted when they assembled at Eminabad in a force of 2,000 strong and began to levy contributions in the neighbouring villages. "A villager, one day, came and complained to Jaspat Rai, Foujdar of Eminabad, encamped at Khukhran three miles from

* General Gordon. *The Sikhs*, p. 58.

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his headquarters, that a band of two thousand Sikhs had fallen upon the village and had driven away the whole of his flock of sheep and goats which the Sikhs were now killing and eating at *Rori Sahib** near Eminabad. The Diwan sent them word to go away but the Sikhs refused to disperse so quickly. The Diwan attacked them with his men, and a sharp battle took place. During the battle a Rangretta Sikh caught hold of the tail of the Diwan's elephant, and mounting up to the howdah cut off the head of the Diwan and ran away with it. The death of the Diwan was the signal for a general stampede of the Moghul troops. The Sikhs returned the head of the Diwan on receipt of Rs. 500 from one Bawa Kirpa Ram† who performed the cremation of the deceased's body.

"Lakhpat Rai, the brother of the deceased, was beside himself with rage on hearing his brother's tragic fate. 'The founder of Sikhism was undoubtedly a Khatri,' he said, 'but I shall not call myself a Khatri if I do not blot out its name from the page of existence.' He set out accordingly with the Governor‡ himself in pursuit of the Sikhs and inflicted a severe defeat upon them in the neighbourhood of Jammu. He brought a large number of prisoners to Lahore, and after having their long hair cut had them all put to the sword in a public thoroughfare outside the Delhi Gate, the scene of their execution being now known as *Shahid Ganj* or the "place of martyrs." A proclamation was at the same time issued threatening to rip open the belly of any one taking the name of Govind."§

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* One of the sacred places of Sikhs, one mile from Eminabad (Gujranwala District), where Nanak halted for a time during his travels.

† This Bawa was probably a Gosain of the well-known village Badoki Gosain, the Gosains of which have been the hereditary Gurus of the Diwans of Eminabad.

‡ Yahya Khan was the Governor from 1743 to 1745, during which period the events described above are recorded to have happened.

§ Ibrat Namah, Ali-ud-Din.

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These were very hard times again for the Sikhs. The Panth Prakash gives a vivid and very pathetic account of the hardships the fugitive Sikhs had to suffer on the barren hills of Basohli and then in the burning deserts of Malwa where they were driven by the avenging hand of the infuriated Lakhpat Rai. Their sufferings were not however destined to be very long. Retribution for Lakhpat Rai and an opportunity for the Khalsa were soon at hand. Yahya's younger brother Shah Nawaz Khan, who was the Governor of Multan, attacked Lahore in 1745 and expelled Yahya Khan and his Diwan, Lakhpat Rai. Fearing the wrath of the Delhi government for thus usurping the province of Lahore, Shah Nawaz turned to Ahmad Shah Durrani and invited him to invade India, promising him his humble submission and hearty co-operation. The Durrani King who had always kept a greedy eye on India hailed this offer and set off to Peshawar with a force of 10,000 men. Shah Nawaz was in the meantime reproached for treason, and was, moreover, reconciled by the Prime Minister, his maternal grandfather, who promised to confirm him as Governor of Lahore in case he opposed the progress of the invader. "On reaching the Khyber, Ahmad Shah sent his ambassador, Muhammad Naim Khan, to Lahore to consult with Shah Nawaz about the plan of the campaign. The messenger who was a haughty and ill-mannered man displeased the young Governor by his rudeness and was sent back with an unsatisfactory answer. The Afghan King advanced to Rohtas* and sent another messenger, this time Sabir Shah, the son of his own spiritual guide. Shah Nawaz knew the strength of the invading army and proudly asked the messenger in a careless manner "How is brother Ahmad Shah?" Sabir was angry at the insolent question and indignantly rebuked the youth for his vanity. Shah Nawaz was enraged and put the messenger

* A very strong fort in Jhelum District.

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to death by pouring molten lead into his mouth."* Ahmad Shah advanced upon Lahore and took it after a short resistance. Shah Nawaz fled to Delhi, and the Durrani appointed Lakhpat Rai, the Governor of Lahore with Jumla Khan† of Kasur as his adviser. Ahmad Shah then marched towards Delhi, but, as is well-known, was defeated at Sarhind and beat a hasty retreat towards Kabul.

These commotions proved highly favourable to the Sikh cause. They returned again to the plains and began their depredations as usual. An easy and profitable prey was found in the army of the vanquished invader which was now receding precipitately to its native country. It "gave an opportunity to the watchful Sikhs of harassing his rear and of gaining confidence in their own prowess."‡ Their resources soon increased by the rich booty their marauding excursions brought them, and they built a fort, called the Ram Rowni, near Amritsar. A most able leader had meanwhile appeared among them, "Jassa Singh Kalal, a brewer or distiller (by caste), who boldly proclaimed the birth of a new power in the State, the "Dal" of the "Khalsa" or army of the theocracy of "Singhs."§

The Khalsa had now become a State, a power to be reckoned with, and though often beaten, it was destined to shake the Moghul power to its foundations and build its own sovereignty on its ruins.

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* His tomb is situated behind the Royal Mosque in Lahore. The quotation is made from Ali-ud-Din's Ibrat Namah.

† Moman Khan according to Panth Prakash.

‡ Cunningham, p. 93.

§ Charsa Singh, Toka Singh and Kirwur Singh were among the companions of Jassa Singh. Cunningham, p. 93.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE SIKHS TAKE LAHORE AND COIN MONEY. (1748-1758).

The first invasion of the Durrani King had been repelled by the ability of Muin-ud-Din, the eldest son of the Wazir of Delhi. The aged minister had himself led the campaign but he was killed in the beginning of the battle while yet reading the Qoran in his tent. The post of Wazir was conferred on Safdar Jang, the son-in-law of Saadat Khan, the viceroy of Oudh. All high posts being generally hereditary, the new minister feared the claims of his rival, Muin-ud-Din, the victorious son of the late Wazir. In order to get the formidable youth out of the way he appointed him to the governorship of Lahore and Multan.

When Muin-ud-Din or Mir Mannu, a title which probably the Sikhs gave him and by which he is best known, came to the Punjab in 1748, he found absolute anarchy and confusion reigning everywhere. The Sikhs had become extremely bold and troublesome. They had rallied round their new fortress and forming themselves into "fanatic confederacies were now seen roving in all directions, ravaging the country and devastating the very suburbs of Lahore".*

As soon, therefore, as Mir Mannu was firmly established in his authority he addressed himself to the task of suppressing the Sikhs. His first act was to storm the fort of Ram Rowni which was captured and destroyed. "He then stationed detachments of troops in all parts infested by the Sikhs with stringent orders to shave their heads and beards wherever they might be found. These measures, being rigorously enforced, checked the progress of Sikh proselytism and compelled the votaries of the Guru to conceal themselves

* Latif, p. 220.

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in the mountains and jungles. Mr. Mannu issued strict orders to the hill Rajas to seize the Sikhs and send them in irons to Lahore. These orders were obeyed and hundreds of Sikhs were brought daily to Lahore and butchered at the *Nakhas* or Shahid Ganj outside the Delhi Gate, in sight of multitude of spectators. The young Mannu became an irreconcilable foe of the Sikhs and was determined to extirpate the nation."*

His plans were, however, thwarted for the moment by the reappearance of Ahmad Shah Durrani a few months after Mannu had established himself in Lahore. At the close of the rainy season the Afghan King crossed the Indus at the head of a formidable army determined to retrieve the losses he had suffered during his first invasion. Mannu at once wrote to Delhi for reinforcements but the courtiers there had hardly any time to spare from their drinking bouts, concerts and dancing parties to attend to affairs of even such importance. The Durrani meanwhile reached the banks of the Chenab, Mannu despairing of any help from Delhi gathered together his own troops and crossed the Ravi to meet the invader. Both the armies met on the banks of the Chenab, near Sodhra.† A little skirmishing took place, but Mannu soon realized his inability to ward off the invasion. He sued for terms, and the Afghan King, being impressed by the ability of the youth who had defeated him at Sarhind and having some complicated affairs at home to look after, consented to retire on the condition that the revenue of the four districts of Pasrur, Gujrat, Sialkot and Aurangabad, the most fruitful principalities of the Punjab, should be assigned to him, as they had been to Nadir Shah from whom he pretended to have derived his title. Mannu is further said to have agreed

* Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 221.

† An ancient town with 100 gates, near Wazirabad, founded by Ayaz, the favourite slave of Mahmud of Ghazni.

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to hold himself tributary to the Afghan King for the whole of the Punjab.*

The absence of the governor and his troops from Lahore encouraged the Sikhs once more to come out from their hiding places. Their persecution and execution in hundreds simply served to increase their fanaticism and hatred against the Moslem government. They despised Mannu's cruelty and the following song seems to have been popular among them :—

"We are the crop and Mannu the sickle,
The more he cuts us
The more we grow
In every house and hamlet."†

They took full advantage of Mannu's absence from the capital, and suddenly fell upon Lahore in large numbers and plundered and burnt the outer city to ashes (*pák bisokhtand*) Mir Mannu was enraged to find the city in ruins on his return, and began to persecute the Sikhs more vigorously than ever. "Thousands of Sikhs were made the victims of the relentless sword, but," the Moslem writer ruefully continues, "the arrow once shot can never come back, the city was ruined."‡

Mir Mannu, however, soon succeeded in restoring order in his dominions by puting to death every Sikh that was captured and driving the rest to the hills and jungles. His success meanwhile in repelling the invasion by talking away the invader gained applause at Delhi. Everyone was jealous of the favour in which he was held, but the Wazir had

* See Latif, Cunningham, Elphinstone, and Murray's Ranjit Singh by Prinsep.

† Mir Mannu asadi datari asi Mannu de soe
Jyon jyon Mannu Wadha da gharin gharin asi hoe
Ibrat Nama. Ali-ud-Din.

‡ *Ibrat Nama* Ali-ud-Din. Neither Cunningham nor any other English historian makes any mention of this inroad of the Sikhs. There is, however, nothing to challenge the accuracy of Ali-ud-Din's statement.

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particular apprehensions of this young man of parts. He was himself designing to set up as independent ruler of Oudh and he knew that his example would not be lost upon the son of his predecessor*. In order therefore to reduce the power of Mannu, he appointed Shahnawaz Khan to the governorship of Multan which he had held before up to 1745 when he came over to Lahore to supplant his elder brother Yahya Khan and from which he was in turn ejected by the deputy of Ahmad Shah Durrani.

This supersession greatly incensed Mannu and he at once sent his deputy, Diwan Kowra Mal, to Multan to resist the new governor. A battle was fought in which Kowra Mal came out victorious with the help of Sikh mercenaries,† and Shahnawaz was slain. The victory meant for Mannu a practical independence of Delhi. Mannu was greatly elated and conferring the title of Maharaja on Kowra Mal for his successful generalship made him the governor of Multan.

Mir Mannu now saw fortune smiling upon him from all sides. The Sikhs were quiet, his rivals were removed, the government of Delhi was too weak and distracted to interfere with him or question his independence. To this success was added the consciousness of having once beaten the dreaded Durrani. He felt himself therefore to be sufficiently strong now to declare his independence and to discontinue his allegiance to the latter if indeed he ever really looked upon him as his liege-lord. The time for the payment of the promised revenue of the four districts had passed and not a farthing had been paid. A demand for the tribute was made

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* Cunningham.

† Panth Prakash puts the number of Kowra Mal's Sikh allies at 20,000 and attributes the victory to their valour. Kowra Mal was himself a Sikh of Guru Nanak, and while his master persecuted the Sikhs he was always pleading for mercy and clemency for them. One reason for taking the Sikhs to Multan was to impress Mir Mannu favourably towards them. Panth Prakash.

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by the Afghan King who at the same time crossed the Indus once more in 1751-52. Having reached the right bank of the Chenab he sent his agent, Diwan Sukh Jiwan Mal, to Lahore to demand the arrears of the revenue. Mannu at first denied his liability to pay any fixed subsidy. As, however, he said, the Shah had taken the trouble of coming to the Punjab, he would be glad to pay him such arrears as might be found due, provided he forthwith retraced his steps to Kabul, as the zemindars had all fled in consternation on hearing of the approach of the Abdali King, and it was impossible to levy even a pice as a tax upon the people of the country as long as the Durrani troops remained where they were."* This explanation was too evasive to be satisfactory and no one knew it better than Mir Mannu himself. As soon as the ambassador turned his back, Mannu marched with his troops to the Chenab to meet the invader.† The Abdali marched upon Lahore and after six months of skirmishing and desultory fighting inflicted a severe defeat upon Mannu after a desperate battle in which the gallant Raja Kowra Mal was killed by an accident to his elephant. Mannu shut himself up in the fort, but finding further resistance fruitless he made his submission to the invader, and the town was occupied by the Afghan troops in the spring of 1752‡.

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* Latif, p. 222.

† Panth Prakash holds that he simply went to give a reception to the invader, and this view seems to be more probable. Otherwise it is difficult to conceive how the Abdali could have been allowed to march to the Ravi without a battle, as Latif without perceiving his inconsistency states that Mannu had gone to meet him with all his troops reinforced by the army from Jullundur as well as Multan.

‡ An interesting anecdote of Mannu's interview with the Afghan conqueror is told by Mufti Ali-ud-Din in his *Ibrat Nama*. The following conversation took place between the Durrani King and Mir Mannu.

Durrani.—"Why didn't you come to make your homage to me before"?

Mir Mannu.—"Because I had, then, another lord to serve."

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These commotions resulting in the occupation of Lahore for the second time by the foreigners gave another crushing blow to the power of the Lahore government. While Muhammadans, invaders and defenders, were engaged in their own affairs the Sikhs had not been idle. They had again issued from their hiding places and had spread a consternation throughout the province. They had virtually taken possession of the whole country lying between Amritsar and the hills.* As soon, therefore, as Mir Mannu was once more established on the Masnad of Lahore he turned his attention to the Sikhs. Adeena Beg was deputed to bring them to book. Adeena welcomed this commission as an opportunity to undo the suspicions which attached to his inaction and treachery at the recent battle of Lahore, and to his alleged temporising with the insurgent peasantry of the Punjab. He fell upon the Sikhs during a festival at Makhowal where they had assembled from all quarters, and inflicted a total defeat upon them. But his object was still to be thought their friend and to desist from crushing them in order to maintain his importance as the manager of a turbulent province. Therefore "he came to an understanding

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Durrani.—"Why didn't that lord now come to your succour"?

Mir Mannu.—"Because he thought his servant could take care of himself."

Durrani.—"What would you have done, if I had fallen in your hands"?

Mir Mannu.—"I would have cut your head and sent it to Delhi to my master."

Durrani.—"Now that you are at my mercy, what do you expect from me"?

Mir Mannu.—"If you are a merchant, sell me, if a tyrant, kill me, if a King, pardon me."

The Shah was struck with the address and frankness of his youthful adversary, and not only spared his life but conferred upon him the title of Farzand (son) Khan Bahadur Rustam-i-Hind, and confirmed him in the governorship of Lahore.

* Cunningham, p. 95.

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with them that their payment of their own rents should be nominal or limited and their exactions from others moderate and systematic*. He also took many of them into his pay, one of the number being Jussa Singh, a carpenter by caste, who afterwards became the founder and head of a powerful confederacy.†

This was the first acknowledgment of the independence or semi-independence of the Sikhs. Greater opportunities were, however, still waiting for them. Mannu died in 1752‡ a few months after his submission to the Durrani King and the reins of government fell into the hands of his widow, Murad Begam, who began to rule in the name of her infant son, Muhammad Amin Khan, as the vassal of the King of Kabul. Ambitions and clever as she was, the times were too turbulent for petticoat government. The Sikhs had now a golden opportunity, and extended their ravages in all directions.§ The infant Amin Khan died, soon after, of small-pox. His mother took the government in her own hands and proclaimed herself the governor of the Punjab. The nobles at Lahore who had a deep regard for the memory of her deceased husband and whom she managed to cajole by promises of rewards and honours gave her their full support, and she also managed to obtain Royal *firmans* of confirmation from the courts of Delhi as well as Kabul.

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* Cunningham, p. 95.

† Jassa Singh, according to Panth Prakash, had taken service with Adeena Beg long before this, in fact before the battle of Ram Rowni (1748). He had been excommunicated by his co-religionists for infanticide and had consequently joined the Muhammadans. He was afterwards pardoned and taken back because he had never betrayed the Sikhs, nor fought against them with a will.

‡ Elphinstone places his death in 1756, so does Latif, but he contradicts himself in the next page. In his *Ibrat Nama* Ali-ud-Din puts it in 1167 H. which would agree with the above date given by Cunningham.

§ See Malcolm.

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Finding herself firmly established in her authority she began to betray the frailty of her sex. Mir Bhikhari Khan was her favourite at the time, but failing to requite her clandestine love for him he was put to death by the chamber-maids of the infatuated Begam*. Her attitude towards her other courtiers too became different. "Almost all gave up attending the darbar, where not only honour but life was at stake, and petitions were sent to the court of Delhi complaining of the conduct of the Begam. Ghazi-ud-Din who had risen to the position of Prime Minister by ousting Safdar Jang was betrothed to the daughter of Mir Mannu, and having great regard for his intended mother-in-law he sent Syed Jamil, one of his confidential servants, to help the Begam with his advice. The situation thus improved to some extent, but the masterful Begam was soon tired of her new councillor and asked the Wazir to remove him. This request was rejected in spite of her repeated entreaties. The exasperated Begam now wrote to the King of Kabul complaining of the interference of the Delhi government. Her duplicity being soon discovered, Ghazi-ud-Din marched with a large force to punish her. She was taken captive and brought to Delhi where the young Wazir took her daughter into marriage and put the mother in confinement. The governorship of Lahore was given to Adeena Beg Khan who had been instrumental in the ruin of the self-willed Begam.

These internecine quarrels and civil wars had again given an opportunity to the Sikhs to raise their heads and renew their depredations. "These bearded freebooters," says Syed Muhammad Latif, "traversed various parts of the province, laying waste the country, depopulating villages and towns and carrying off flocks and herds. All order, both civil and

* Ali-ud-Din ascribes his death to his insubordination and insolence. Murray and Browne refer to the supposed relations of Bhikhari Khan and Murad Begum.

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military, was at an end. Not a pice could be levied from the zemindars. Disorder, anarchy and confusion prevailed throughout the country."

To complete, as it were, the work of ruin and prepare the way for Sikh ascendancy came now the fourth invasion of Ahmad Shah Durrani. As soon as he heard of the capture of Lahore by the Government of Delhi, he hastened to the Punjab in the autumn of 1755. Adeena Beg fled to the hills. Leaving his Assistant in Lahore, the invader at once marched towards Sirhind and Delhi. He plundered the capital, took Hazrat Begum, a daughter of Muhammad Shah, into marriage, married his son to another princess, levied heavy contributions upon the courtiers and appointing Najib-ud-Daulah, a Rohilla chieftain, to be the commander-in-chief of Moghul forces on his behalf he left Delhi, looting the towns of Muthura and Agra, perpetrating wholesale massacres and carrying away thousands as slaves.

When passing through the Punjab his rear was attacked by the Sikhs, the strugglers were put to the sword and his baggage plundered and carried away by them. He was greatly incensed at the insolence of the Sikh marauders, but a rebellion having meanwhile broken out in Turkistan, he hurried back to Kabul in 1757, leaving his son, Tymur, under the guardianship of Jahan Khan, in charge of the Punjab.

Tymur had now two enemies to suppress. Adeena who had been guilty of betraying his master to the Delhi government and the Sikhs who had looted his father's baggage, and were even then carrying fire and sword into the Muhammadan territory.

The Sikhs were the first to attract his attention. Jassa Singh, the carpenter, had restored Ram Rowni at Amritsar

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under its new name, Ram Garh.* The place was attacked, the fortress was razed to the ground, the sacred buildings were demolished and the tank of nectar was filled up with their ruins. The Sikhs fled to the hills burning with rage at the insult done to their religion.

Adeena Beg had meanwhile turned out Nasir Ali, the Durrani Deputy in Jullundur, with the help of the Sikhs who now formed the best part of his troops, and had established himself in his old province.

Prince Tymur, therefore, next turned his attention to him. He was summoned to Lahore but being sure of the treatment in store for him he excused himself on the ground of the Sikh disturbances which he urged were so serious that his absence from his province would be fatal. Prince Tymur, consequently, sent a detachment of troops under Murad Khan to bring him to book. Adeena opposed him with his Sikhs and inflicted a complete defeat upon the Lahore troops. The incensed prince put the defeated general to death on suspicion of treachery, and marched in person to chastise Adeena Beg. Finding himself incapable of resistance the latter fled to the hills of Nalagarh and hid himself there.

The Sikhs had also taken shelter in the hills. The baffled rebels now met together in exile and concerted a plan to attack the Durrani Governor of Lahore. The Sikhs, who were already burning with revenge and wanted only some recess and encouragement, now girt up their loins and descended from the hills with a fixed determination to destroy the Durrani tyrant or be destroyed in the attempt. They divided themselves into two sections, one under the leadership of the celebrated Jassa Singh Kalal and the other under

* It was from this fortress that the confederacy founded by Jassa Singh took its name. All Sikh carpenters affect to call themselves Ram Garhias, as all *Kalals* call themselves Ahluwalias from the village Ahlu near Lahore, the home of their Chief.

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Jassa Singh Ram Garhia and Adeena Beg. The first detachment marched towards Lahore. The surrounding country began to swarm with horsemen. It was a religious war and all the followers of Govind assembled to revenge the insult offered to their religion. Jahan Khan came out to meet them and succeeded at first in dispersing them, but the Sikhs soon assembled again in larger numbers, surrounded the city, cut off all communication and began to collect the revenues of the country around Lahore and dispose of it as they liked.* After many skirmishes a decisive action was fought early in 1758. "The Pathans were completely routed, and this was the first decisive victory on record achieved by the Sikhs over the Afghans."†

The other section of the Khalsa army was crowned with similar success in the Jullundur Doab. The Afghan general Sarfaraz Khan was defeated and his army dispersed. Prince Tymur and Jahan Khan, his guardian, were now reduced to straits, and finding it hopeless to contend against the ever-increasing numbers of the Sikhs sought their safety in escape to the Chenab. "They retreated in the night, unknown even to their Hindustani troops whom they distrusted, and in such haste that the royal family fell into the hands of the enemy, though they were subsequently released."‡

The triumphant Sikhs now occupied Lahore under the leadership of Jassa Singh Kalal who now assumed the sovereignty§ of the country. They used the old mint of the Moghuls to coin a rupee bearing the Persian inscription,

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* Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 230.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Syed Muhammad Latif, p. 230.

§ His followers called him "Padshah" or King, but the Sikhs never regarded him as such, nor did he claim any superiority over the *Khalsa*.

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meaning] "Coined by the grace of God in the country of Ahmad, captured by Jassa Kalal."*

This was the first time the Sikhs became the paramount power in the Punjab, though as we shall see, some time was yet to elapse before that Province passed permanently into their hands.

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* *Sikka zad dar jahan bafazl-i-Akal*
Mulk-i-Ahmad girift Jassa Kalal.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SIKHS BECOME A SOVEREIGN POWER. (1758-1768).

The Sikhs had taken Lahore, but their time was not yet come to rule as a sovereign power.

Adeena Beg, who had so far been using the Sikhs as his tools, as he imagined, was extremely disappointed and surprised to find himself chucked off by them, as he had fancied that the Sikhs were fighting for him, and that the chief authority would be vested in him. The Mahrattas had already come to Delhi at the invitation of Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din. Adeena Beg, therefore, waited upon Raghoba and invited him to extend the Mahratta arms to the Indus. He had some Sikh troops still under his control and with these he marched from Jumna in company with Raghoba. Sarhind was taken and the Durrani governor Samundar Khan expelled from it. The Sikhs, however, let themselves loose on the city which they considered their birth-right and a meritorious deed to plunder in order to revenge the assassination of their Guru's infant sons perpetrated there. The Mahrattas who were deprived of their share of the loot were incensed and turned out the Sikhs who fled also from Lahore on the approach of the Mahrattas. Adeena Beg erected a lofty and magnificent platform in the Shalamar gardens at a cost of Rs. 125,000 on which Raghoba was seated. The gardens were illuminated and the fountains made to play rose-water. The Durrani Prince and his guardian Jahan Khan left the Punjab and Mahratta flag began to wave in Lahore, Multan and Attock. Ramji Shamji was appointed governor of Multan and Sahiba Patel the governor of Attock, while the viceroyalty of Lahore was conferred upon Adeena Beg.*

* *Ibrat Nama* of Ali-ud-Din states that Adeena got the viceroyalty of Jullundur Doab while Lahore was given over to Mirza Khan who was soon

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The Sikhs, though expelled from Lahore, had not been idle. Under capable and daring leaders like the two Jassa Singhs Hari Singh Bhangi, Jai Singh Kanhia, Hira Singh Nikai, Khushal Singh Faizulpuria, Ala Singh Phulkia and Charat Singh Sukerchakia, the grandfather of Ranjit Singh, they were supreme everywhere, committing depredations in all parts of the country unchecked. Adeena, however, no longer depending on the support of the Sikhs turned upon his old friends. He wanted to punish them for their arrogance and disregard of himself, as well as to stop their present inroads and exactions. The greatest trouble was being caused in the Majha country. The Sikhs had rebuilt the temple and cleared the sacred tank at Amritsar* and were meting out the same treatment to the Muhammadans as they had received at their hands.† Adeena Beg, therefore, sent a strong body of cavalry under Mir Aziz Bakhshi with orders to destroy the Sikhs wherever they could be found. Syed Muhammad Latif, quoting from the contemporary memoirs of Maulvi Muhammad Din of Batala (Adeena's headquarters for a time) says: "Four thousand pioneers accompanied the Mir, with their sharpened tools, for the purpose of clearing the jungle where the Sikhs had concealed themselves. Thousands of Sikhs were thus hunted down and mercilessly butchered. The more adventurous fled and sought shelter within the mud fort of Ram Rowni (now Ramgarh). The principal refugees were Nodh Singh Ram Gurhia, Jassa Singh and Malla Singh and Tara Singh his brothers, Jai Singh

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dismissed to make room for Bapoo Rao Dadoo and Sheesha Pandit. It seems, however, certain that Adeena held Lahore for a few months until his death in the end of 1758.

* Mufti Ali-ud-Din says the buildings, etc., were restored by the Mahrattas.

† The Muhammadans were employed at the point of the bayonet to clear the tank, etc., which their co-religionists had devastated. Syed Muhammad Latif.

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Kanhia and Amar Singh Kingra." They were, however, soon hunted out and dispersed with great slaughter.

Adeena died at the end of 1758 and the ever-vigilant Sikhs became active again. Jassa Singh the carpenter with Jai Singh Kanhia, on the one hand, and Jassa Singh Kalal, on the other, were carrying the flag of the Khalsa into new territories. In the meantime the news of the expulsion of his son by the Sikhs and the occupation of Lahore by the Mahrattas having reached Ahmad Shah he came down once more in the winter of 1759 to recover his lost province. The Mahratta governors evacuated the Punjab on his approach. He appointed Haji Karim Dad Khan as temporary governor of Lahore and hastened to Delhi to punish the Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din and reduce the Mahrattas. He was occupied with the Mahrattas up to the beginning of 1761 when the great battle of Panipat was fought and Mahratta aspirations humbled for ever.

The absence of the Durrani and his deputies, with nearly every available soldier towards Delhi, had left the Punjab an easy prey in the hands of the Sikhs.* The principal Sikh chiefs, *viz.*, Jassa Kalal, Chet Singh Kanhia, Hari Singh Bhangi, Gujar Singh Bhangi and Lahna Singh Bhangi assembled at Amritsar on the Baisakhi day (middle of April 1760). A Council was held, an attack on Lahore was decided upon, and the chiefs standing before their sacred book, prayed for success in the expedition. Soon after, they collected their forces and fell upon the defenceless city. The fortifications were burnt and the town was given over to plunder. The citizens, however, made their submission and waited upon the victors in a deputation consisting of Pirzada Ghulam Hussain Sarhindi, Mian Muhamad

* Even the newly appointed governor of Lahore, Karim Dad, and the governor of Pasrur, had been summoned to Panipat. Lahore was then left in charge of Amir Muhammad Khan as officiating governor.

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Naqi, Mir Nathu Shah, Mian Shahr Yar, Hafiz Qadir Bakhsh and others. A *nazrana* (or tribute money) of Rs. 30,000 was offered, and the Sikhs, knowing the Durrani might soon return, left the city with their spoils.*

The Sikhs next turned their attention to the Parganahs or outlying districts. One detachment under Jassa Singh carpenter and Jai Singh Kanhia took Batala, Kalanaur, Hargovindpore, Kadian and most of the other towns in the Amritsar and Gurdaspore districts, yielding a revenue between six and ten lakhs†. Another section of the Khalsa Army, under Jassa Singh Kalal plundered Sarhind and Dipalpore, seized Dogar and Nypal in the Ferozepore district where he built fortified posts. He also annexed Hoshiarpore and a part of the Ambala district, and laid Rai Ibrahim Bhatti the Muhammadan chief of Kapurthala under contribution. The Abdali returned from Delhi in the spring of 1761. The Punjab was ceded to him, and though he had heard everything about the depredations of the Sikhs in Lahore and the outlying country, he did not stop to chastise them. He appointed Zen Khan, governor of Sarhind, Sarbuland Khan to the charge of Multan and Khwaja Obed Khan to the viceroyalty of Lahore and left for Kabul in May 1761.

No sooner did the Durrani turn his back upon India than the Sikhs set to work again. Bhima Singh and Sarup Singh began to build forts in the neighbourhood of Lahore, while Charat Singh, the grandfather of Ranjit Singh, threw up a mud fortress at Gujranwala, forty miles north of Lahore,‡ and Sikh fortresses began to appear like mushrooms in all parts of the Punjab.

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* Ibrat Nama of Ali-ud-Din.

† Syed Muhammad Latif.

‡ Ibrat Nama, Ali-ud-Din.

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The Abdali King had wisely contented himself with the Punjab, ceded to him by the Delhi government in 1761, but even the Punjab now seemed to be slipping from his hands. Finding the Sikhs supreme everywhere he sent one of his trusted generals Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamizai with a strong force to reduce them to order. A desperate action was fought in the beginning of 1762 in which the Afghans were defeated and shut up in the fort of Sialkot and were from thence expelled and driven to the hills of Jammu.

The Sikhs now became very bold, stopped and intercepted all revenues.* Being reduced to such straits the Durrani governor of Lahore marched upon Gujranwala with a large force and twelve pieces of cannon about the middle of 1762. Baba Sham Singh who was revered by the Sikhs as a descendant of the Gurus was at that time a prisoner with Obed Khan. When the Lahore army neared Gujranwala, the Sikhs† met it with 1,500 horsemen and began negotiations with Obed Khan about the release of the holy man while Charat Singh with only 25 men remained in the fort. The night having fallen in the meantime an alarm was spread in the Afghan army, and fearing a night attack‡ the Afghans fled in all directions, leaving their baggage and guns, etc., to be plundered by the Sikhs. Sahib Singh, one of the Lahore generals, deserted the Afghans and joined the Sikhs with his troops. Diwan Suba Rai and Hari Ram Chobdar (Gentleman Usher) were killed, while Obed Khan fled to Jukalian under cover of night, and attended by three or four hundred horsemen of Mian Khan Chattha escaped to Lahore from whence he did not venture out again for one whole year.§

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* Ibrat Nama. Ali-ud-Din.

† Under Jassa Singh Ahlowaha and Hari Singh and Gujjar Singh Bhangi. Ibrat Nama. *Ibid.*

‡ Latif says the attack was actually made.

§ *Ibrat Nama.* Ali-ud-Din Mufti.

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After this victory the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar, performed ablutions in the sacred tank and held the first* regular 'Gurmata' or State Council. Hingan Khan of Malerkotla had helped the governor of Sarhind during Jassa Kalal's attack upon that city. It was decided to punish him first of all and then chastise Akil Das the Abbot of Jandiala for his treason against the Khalsa and adherence to the Durrani King.

The possessions of Hingan Khan were ravaged and Jandiala was besieged. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, who had already served the Muhammadans for many years, seems to have been anxious to preserve friendly relations with the Durrani King. He had, therefore, secretly informed the Mahant of Jandiala that the storm was going to burst upon him. The latter sent an urgent petition to Ahmad Shah depicting his pitiable condition and praying for timely help.†

The Durrani hastened to India once more and reached Lahore at the end of 1762. The Sikhs fled at his approach and crossed the Sutlej with the intention of aiding their brethren who were besieging Zen Khan, the Durrani governor of Sarhind. The Abdali made one of those rapid marches for which he was so famous, and covering a distance of nearly 150 miles in 2½ days surprised the Sikhs near Ludhiana just when they were going to engage Zen Khan. A most desperate battle was fought, but the Sikhs were

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* Malcolm says the very first was held by Guru Govind Singh himself. After his death, I think, the first council of this kind was held on Baisakhi 1760 before attacking Lahore. See *supra*.

† *Ibrat Nama* quotes a line presumably taken from the petition :—

Bar lab rasida janam tō biye ki zinda manam,
Pas azan ki man namanam ba chi kar ai mara.

"My life is on my lips, come so that I may live; after I am no more, of what use wilt thou be to me"?

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ultimately defeated, leaving thousands of dead on the field.* The losses of the Sikhs were so great that the disaster is still remembered as the great "Ghullu Ghara" or the great holocaust. Ala Singh, the founder of the present ruling family of Patiala, was taken a prisoner at Burala and was brought in chains to Lahore. His wife, however, paid a heavy ransom of Rs. 4,00,000 and the Shah being pleased with the manly bearing of the captive chief released him at the intercession of the grand Wazir and restored him to his estates with the title of Raja. The conqueror then returned to the Punjab and visited Amritsar where some Sikhs had again assembled to celebrate the Diwali festival. On his approach they dispersed and the victorious Afghan gratified his own resentment and indulged the savage bigotry of his followers by destroying the renewed temples of Amritsar by polluting the pools with slaughtered cows, by encasing numerous pyramids with the heads of decapitated Sikhs and by cleansing the walls of desecrated mosques with the blood of his infidel enemies."† An insurrection having in the meantime broken out in Kandhar, the Durrani appointed Kabuli Mal ‡ to the viceroyalty of Lahore and hastily retreated to his own kingdom in the beginning of 1763.

The Sikhs, though greatly weakened, were not cast down. "The Sikh nation," says Malcolm, "throughout their early history have always appeared like a suppressed flame to rise into higher splendour from every attempt to crush them." The feeling had now developed in them that they were a

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* The number of the Sikh dead is variously given. Cunningham gives between 12 and 25 thousand; *Tarikh-i-Ahmadi*, 30,000; Latif would agree with Kanahya Lal who puts it at 24,000; Malcolm over 20,000; *Ibrat Nama* 30,000; Murray was assured by a Moslem soldier of Malerkotla who fought in the battle that only 12,000 Sikhs were killed and wounded.

(See Prinsep, p. 20).

† Cunningham, p. 101.

‡ A Brahman from Kabul; Hügel, p. 271.

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nation, and that they were no longer fighting as a band of robbers, hunted and hounded and harassed by the government constituted by any law, but that they had as much right to the kingdom as any Muhammadan power, whom as in the case of the Durranis especially, they regarded as intruders and usurpers. They were at the same time fully conscious of their power and the elevation of Ala Singh to the dignity of a Raja had given them a further assurance that they were respected and feared even by the dreaded Durrani. They at once assembled in large numbers and fell upon Kasur and sacked it. The old Chief of Malerkotla was the next to feel the edge of their wrath. Hingan was slain and Malerkotla plundered.

The Sikhs next marched upon Sarhind in December 1763 to settle their scores with Zen Khan, the deputy of Ahmad Shah. The two Jassa Singhs, Ala Singh, now Raja of Patiala, and the leaders of almost all the confederacies* joined in the expedition against this hated city. Zen Khan gave battle to the Khalsa army but he was slain with Lachhmi Narain, his second-in-command, and the whole country from the Sutlej to the Jumna fell into the hands of the Sikhs and was partitioned by the chiefs among themselves.† Sarhind was destroyed and the ruins were purchased

* Cunningham puts the number of Sikh troops at 40,000 or thereabouts.

† "Tradition still describes," says Cunningham, "how the Sikhs dispersed as soon as the battle was won, and how, riding day and night, each horseman would throw his belt and scabbard, his articles of dress and accoutrement, until he was almost naked, into successive villages to mark them as his." These horsemen, says Mufti Ali-ud-Din, would first demand money from the Zemindars of the villages through which they passed. If no money was forthcoming they would ask for some *gur* (coarse sugar), failing that they would take some loaves of bread. The villagers laughed but the Sikh horseman soon returned and taking those petty offers as tokens of submission would establish his sway over each village through which he had ridden." Ali-ud-Din also gives the names of various towns and villages occupied by each chief after this great victory.

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for Rs. 25,000 by Ala Singh from Bhai Budh Singh an old companion of the last Guru, to whom the victors had assigned it as a gift. Elated with their victory the Sikhs crossed the Jumna and swept through the country round Saharanpur. Najib-ud-Daulah who was then fighting the Jats of Bhartpore hastened to save his own possessions and succeeded in bribing the Sikhs out of his territory. He resumed his operations against the Jats and defeated them, killing their chief, the well-known Suraj Mal. The son of the deceased chief, however, besieged Delhi with the help of the Sikhs and the Mahrattas and reduced the Rohilla chief to great straits.

The news of the fall of Sarhind and the distress of his Rohilla agent brought the Durrani once more, for the seventh time, to India in the year 1764. The siege of Delhi was in the meantime raised owing to quarrels among the invaders, and rebellions having again broken out in Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah did not make any attempt to recover Sarhind. He conferred the title of Maharaja on Ala Singh allowing him to coin money in his own name, and acknowledged him as Governor of Sarhind which he was to be supposed to hold on his behalf.

In the meantime the Sikhs had established their sway in the neighbourhood of Lahore. Kabuli Mal had been forced by them to punish the butchers who slaughtered cows in the city. The representative of Sardar Hari Singh Banghi, named Tek Chand, resided at the court of Lahore to direct the governor in the work of administration. Sobha Singh's Munshi sat with the Afghan officials at the Shah Alami Gate and received a fixed portion of the customs on his behalf. While passing through Lahore, on his way back, the Durrani King was apprised of this state of affairs and he chased the Sikhs to Kalanaur where 1500 of their number were killed in a battle fought near Bulaki Chak, but he did

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not and could not do anything further to mend matters. Kabuli Mal continued as governor, and the Shah precipitately left for his country.

He had hardly turned his back when the Sikhs again swarmed near Lahore. Lahna Singh and Gujar Singh, both of the Bhangi clan, encamped with their troops at Baghbanpura near Lahore and concocted a plot with Sultan, Ghulam Rasul, Ashraf, Channu and Baqar, the *arains* of the village who served as gardeners in the fort. Nand Ram Purbia, the *thanadar* (commander) of the fort also was won over. The wall of the fort was broken at night and Gujar Singh entered into the fort with fifty chosen warriors. According to a previous arrangement, the pavilion where Ahmad Shah used to put up during his stay in Lahore was set on fire to give a signal to Lahna Singh who was waiting outside with the main body of troops. The whole Khalsa army then rushed in. Kabuli Mal was away. Amar Singh his nephew and Jagannath his son-in-law showed some resistance but they were soon overpowered and the Khalsa flag was planted on the citadel.* The city was given over to plunder, which was stopped after some time at the intercession of some Hindu and Muhammadan *reises*.† The town and the country around were divided into three lots, south of Lahore up to Niaz Beg falling to the share of Sobha Singh, Kabuli Mal's Haveli with the eastern city was assigned to Gujar Singh.‡ while Lehna Singh occupied the fort and the Royal Mosque.§ This conquest

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* See *Ibrat Nama* of Ali-ud-Din for a further account of this interesting *coup d'tat et-main*.

† *E. g.*, Chaudhari Roopa, Lala Bishan Singh, Maharaj Singh, Hafiz Qadir Bakhsh and Mir Nathu Shah, the last a saint of great reputation. *Ibrat Nama*.

‡ An eastern suburb of Lahore is still called Qila (or Fort) Gujar Singh.

§ Which, of course, ceased to be a mosque, and formed part of Sikh Magazine up to 1849 A. D.

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carried the Sikh possessions up to the banks of the Jhelum so that the whole country between the Jumna and the above-mentioned river now formed the commonwealth of the Khalsa.

The Sikh confederates then held a national council at Amritsar in 1765, and by a decree of the Khalsa proclaimed their own religion as supreme. The assumption of sovereignty was marked by the striking of a coin bearing the Persian inscription.

"Degh o Tegho Fataho Nusrat bedarang,
Yaft az Nanak Guru Govind Singh"

which means "Guru Govind Singh received from Nanak Grace, Power and rapid victory."

Nearly two years passed in peace and tranquillity. In 1767, however, the Abdali descended once more upon the plains of India to make a final effort to recover the Punjab, the richest province in his dominions. He was, however, growing old, was already suffering from cancer of the nose and the Sikhs had become by that time the masters of the country from the Jamna to the Jhelum. There was, therefore, no chance of recovering the lost province by force of arms. Consequently he tried to preserve his sway by conciliation. The Sikh rulers of Lahore had fled at his approach. When he reached Lahore he summoned Lehna Singh.* but the latter did not comply. Dadan Khan.

* "A deputation of Lahore citizens waited upon his Majesty and told him that Lehna Singh was a very good and sympathetic ruler. In spite of his power he never made any distinction between the Hindus and the Mussulmans. On the day of Id-ud-Duha he bestowed turbans on the Qazi, the Mufti and the Imans of the mosques and held all the citizens in great regard. Ahmad Shah regretted that such a popular ruler should have fled away. He then wrote to Lehna Singh offering him the governorship of Lahore with great honours; but the latter declined stating that he would fall in the eyes of his co-religionists if he accepted his Moslem Majesty's offer." *Ibrat Nama*. Ahmad Shah also sent him a present of fruits, but he returned

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was appointed governor of Lahore,* Shuja Khan that of Multan and Amar Singh, son of Ala Singh, confirmed in the sovereignty of Patiala and Sarhind. A detachment of his troops† at this point deserted him and returned to Kabul, and fearing some mischief at home Ahmad Shah precipitately followed them home.‡ He had hardly turned his back upon Lahore when the Sikhs followed in his footsteps, harassing his rear and plundering his baggage. As soon as he crossed the Indus, the Sikhs, led by Charat Singh and others stormed the fort of Rohtas and turned out Sarfraz Khan, the Durrani governor. The three joint rulers of Lahore had occupied it again and the fall of Rohtas extended the Khalsa dominions to the banks of the Indus. Thus, in 1768, the Khalsa commonwealth extended from the Jamna to the Indus. The seed sown by Nanak had now, thanks to the talents of his successors, the great military genius of Govind and the unconquerable spirit of Banda, blossomed into a rich crop. The nation started with the rosary and ended by snatching the sceptre from the oppressing hand of its tyrannical masters. The political organisation of the Sikhs was now complete, and the sovereignty of the land of the Five Waters had now permanently§ passed to the children of the Khalsa to be kept in custody for a greater Power who was after a century to mould its destinies for the future.

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it saying that fruits were a luxury for Kings, he was a humble peasant and grain was the best food for him. Syed Muhammad Latif.

* Daud Khan, according to Syed Muhammad Latif.

† Twelve thousand according to Cunningham and Latif and Hügel; only 400 or 500 according to *Ibrat Nama*.

‡ Cunningham is absolutely wrong in saying that he avoided Lahore during this invasion. See *Panth Prakash*, *Ibrat Nama* and Syed Muhammad Latif.

§ The Sikhs were a little disturbed in 1797 by the incursion of Shahzaman, but it was only a passing storm and since 1768 the Sikhs had no external foe to contend with up to the time of Anglo-Sikh wars.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE PUNJAB UNDER THE MISALS (1768-1798).

The Khalsa had now become the paramount power in the Punjab but it was far from being a consolidated power. The province was partitioned into as many as twelve independent States under Sikh rulers and the only bond of union among them was a common faith and common danger when they presented a solid front to the enemy. Otherwise these States were quite independent of one another, and, as will be seen from the following pages, often at war with one another. Their possessions were constantly changing, so that it is absolutely impossible to give a political map of the Punjab of those days. Still there was some sort of government, and some excellent political institutions flourished even under this government. At any rate the government of the Misals filled the gap between the end of the Moghul rule and the settled administration of Ranjit Singh. It seems, therefore, necessary to give a brief account of these Misals before making a review of the chief characteristics of the prominent institutions which were common to all the different confederacies.

I.—THE BHANGI MISAL (1716-1802).

The Bhangi Misal was founded by one Chhajja Singh, a Jat of Panjwar, near Amritsar. He had received the *pahul* from the hands of no less a personage than Banda himself, and it seems that the baptismal injunctions of the great leader had not been lost upon him. He organized a little band of Jats whom he had himself converted to Sikhism and began to make plundering excursions in the territories of the Moghul. It was, however, under the leadership of Bhim Singh that the confederacy assumed an organised form and rose to power. This Bhim Singh seems to have been an

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idle vagabond, addicted to and living by grinding *bhang** in the Golden Temple before he was converted by Chhajja Singh and enlisted as a soldier. It was now that his latent genius as an organiser and commander of men had a free play. Nadir Shah's invasion had produced a great commotion in the country and Bhim Singh took full advantage of it and turned the little band of marauders left by his predecessor into a powerful confederacy.

Bhim Singh was succeeded by his nephew and adopted son Hari Singh, a son of Bhup Singh, Zemindar of Patoh near Wadni. Hari Singh was richly endowed with all the gifts of a great soldier and able commander and under him the Bhangi Misal rose to great eminence, wealth and power.

He had an army of twenty thousand men and was at this time the most powerful Sikh Chief. He took Sialkot, Karial and Narowal, annexed Chiniot and Jhang. In 1762 he attacked Kot Khawja Said near Lahore and carried away all the munitions of war which Khawja Obed, the then Governor of Lahore, had deposited there. After this he led his troops beyond the Indus and swept through the Derajat division, looting and punishing the Muhammadan Chieftains for their bigotry and oppression. He took Rawalpindi† and subdued the whole Majha and Malwa tracts. He sacked Jammu and making Raja Ranjitdev his tributary penetrated into Kashmir where, however, his arms received a check and he was repulsed with great loss. A detachment of the Misal headed by Rai Singh of Buria carried the flag

* An intoxicating drug consisting of the leaves of a plant which grows wild on the banks of many rivers in the Punjab.

It was the *bhang* drinking habit of Bhim Singh that gave the confederacy its name.

Bhim Singh was a relation of Chhajja Singh and was a native of Kasur.

† The leader of this expedition was Sardar Milkha Singh, a native of Kaleki near Kasur, who afterwards founded the village of Thepur (Lahore District) and established himself there.

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of victory to the Jamna. Kasur which was strongly governed by a powerful Afghan family had so far escaped the depredations of the Sikhs. In 1763, however, Hari Singh in conjunction with the Kanhia and Ramgarhia Misals attacked and reduced Kasur. In 1764 Hari Singh fell out with a fellow-Sikh Chief, Amar Singh the Raja of Patiala, and was killed in the battle.

Hari Singh was succeeded by his eldest son named Jhanda Singh under whom the Bhangi Misal reached the zenith of its power. In 1766 A. D. he led an expedition against Multan and the Chief of Bahawalpore, but a treaty was concluded between them by which Jhanda Singh was acknowledged as the lord of the territories up to Pakpattan. In 1767 he built a fort behind the Lun Mandi in Amritsar which was long known as *Qila-i-Bhangian*, or the fort of Bhangis.*

In 1771 Multan was invaded again, but the invaders were repulsed by the combined forces of Multan and Bahawalpore. The following year, however, a quarrel arose between the successive governors of Multan and one of them, Sharif Beg Taklu, summoned Jhanda Singh to his aid. The Sikh Chief welcomed this opportunity and hastened to Multan accompanied by Lahna Singh and other leading Chiefs of his Misal. Shuja Khan and his allies the Daudpotras were defeated and Multan was taken and retained by the Sikhs. Sharif Beg retired to Sindh and the governorship of Multan was conferred on one Diwan Singh, a lieutenant of Jhanda Singh.

The same year Jhanda Singh attacked Ramnagar, the capital of the Chatthas in the Gujranwala District and took possession of the famous gun known as the Zamzama or

* According to Latif (p. 297) this fort was built in 1772 after the conquest of Multan, but I think the version of Punjab Chiefs given above is more reliable.

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Top Bhangian. Next year the quarrel between Ranjit Dev of Jammu and his son Brij Raj Dev took all the important Sikh Chiefs there and Jhanda Singh who sided with Ranjit Dev was assassinated in 1774 by a Mazhabi Sikh who had been bribed by the Kanhias who, along with Charat Singh Sukerchakia, had sided with the rebel son of Ranjit Dev.

Ganda Singh, his younger brother, succeeded Jhanda Singh and strengthened the Bhangi fort at Amritsar and enlarged and beautified the holy city. He was constantly thinking of avenging his brother's death on the Kanhias and a pretext for hostilities was soon found. Pathankot was held by the widow of Nand Singh, a Misaldar of Jhanda Singh, and this lady married her daughter to one Tara Singh, a scion of the Kanhia Misal and bestowed the estate of Pathankot upon her as a dowry. Ganda Singh wanted it back. The Kanhias refused to surrender it and a battle was fought at Dina Nagar. Ganda Singh fell ill, and died and his nephew and successor Charat Singh was killed in an engagement at Pathankot. The Bhangis, disheartened at the death of their leaders, fled from the field of battle, leaving the whole territory of Pathankot to the Kanhias.

The Bhangis now elected, as their Chief, Desa Singh the minor son of Ganda Singh who had been passed over owing to his tender years. The Misal now got out of control. Many Sardars became independent. Jhang and Multan* were lost. Desa Singh tried to recover the Jhang

* Multan had been attacked by Muzaffar Khan and the Nawab of Bahawalpore in 1777, but Diwan Singh had repulsed them. The following year Timur, the son of Ahmad Shah Durrani, had sent an army to reduce Multan, but even this had been routed by Diwan Singh. The King now took the field in person with 18,000 Afghan troops. The Sikhs were defeated after a desperate battle in which they lost more than 3,000 men. Multan was bestowed by the King on Shuja Khan, its old governor, who ruled there till Ranjit Singh expelled him.

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territory but while fighting there he came in collision with Mahan Singh, the father of Ranjit Singh, and was killed in battle in 1782.

He was succeeded by Gulab Singh, his minor son, who was given over to luxury and debauchery. The only achievement to his credit is that he once more reduced Kasur though it was again recovered by the Pathans, Nizam-ud-Din Khan and Kutb-ud-Din Khan, in 1794. He also entered into a Cabal which consisted of himself, Sahib Singh Bhangi, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, and Nizam-ud-Din Khan of Kasur with the object of assassinating Ranjit Singh who had just taken Lahore in 1799. They summoned him in 1800 to Bhasin with the ostensible object of consulting him as to an important matter of national concern. Ranjit attended but he brought a large army with him. The plot was abandoned and the chiefs engaged in feasting during which Gulab Singh who was a great drunkard caught *delirium tremens* and died. His minor son, Gurdit Singh, succeeded him, but Ranjit Singh who had always had a greedy eye on Amritsar demanded the big *Bhangi Top* from him which his mother, Sukhan, who was his guardian, refused to surrender. This was a sufficient plea for Ranjit Singh to declare war on the Bhangi Misal. Amritsar was attacked and the Bhangi fort was reduced in less than five hours. The mother and the son fled and took shelter with Sardar Jodh Singh. Gurdit afterwards repaired to his native village Panjwar in the *tahsil* of Tarn Taran where he died. His descendants still exist and like ordinary peasants live by tilling the soil with their own hand.

SECOND BRANCH OF THE BHANGI MISAL.

The second branch of the Bhangi Misal also rose to great power and has left a mark in Sikh history. The leaders

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of this branch were Lehna Singh and Gujar Singh, some of whose achievements have been already recorded.

The grandfather of Lehna Singh was an ordinary Jat of Sadawala. Being reduced to extremely straitened circumstances he went to Mastipur, near Kartarpur, and was adopted there by a carpenter as his son. A son named Dargaha was born to him there and Lehna Singh was the son of this Dargaha. Lehna was quite a boy when he ran away from home and reaching the village Roranwala, near Attari, entered into service with Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh who was one of the principal misaldars of Hari Singh Bhangi. Gurbakhsh had no son and adopted Lehna. Gujar Singh, the other leader of this branch, was a grandson of Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh, being his daughter's son. At the death of the Sardar a quarrel arose between Gujar Singh and Lehna Singh, but after some fighting they came to terms and divided the estates of the late Sardar half and half.

In 1765 they joined Sobha Singh and took Lahore where, as described in the last chapter, they ruled with some intermissions until their death. After Lehna Singh's death in 1797 his son, Chet Singh, succeeded to his possessions but was turned out by Ranjit Singh* in 1799. His son Atar Singh became a vassal of Ranjit Singh and was alive in 1849 when the village of Chak Dido which formed a part of his jagir was allowed to him and his mother by the British Government. There is no trace to be found of the successors of Atar Singh with whom it seems Lehna Singh's line ended.

Gujar Singh was a much more powerful chief. After the conquest of Lahore he marched northwards and annexed

* Being disgusted with the imbecility of Chet Singh and Mohar Singh (son of Sobha Singh) three of the leading reises of Lahore, *viz.*, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh, *Hakim* Hakim Rai and Mian Ashiq Muhammad summoned Ranjit Singh to Lahore. Ranjit Singh came with a large army and as previously arranged, Chaudhri Mohkum Din of Nawankot opened the Lohari Gate by which Ranjit Singh entered the town.

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Gujrat, which he conquered from Sultan Mukkarab, a Gakkhar Chief. In 1766 he reduced Jammu and along with Jhanda Singh took tribute from the Raja of that place. The same year he took Poonch, Islamgarh and Dewabotala. In 1767 he went to Amritsar and founded a fort named Qila Gujar Singh after him on the site where Govindgarh now stands.* Gujar Singh had three sons, Sukha Singh, Sahib Singh, Fateh Singh. Sukha Singh was killed in a battle with Sahib Singh. Sahib Singh was married to Mahan Singh's sister, *i.e.*, an aunt of Ranjit Singh and displeased his father by surrendering a Muhammadan Chief to his brother-in-law against the wishes of his father Gujar Singh with whom the Muhammadan Chief had taken refuge during the war of Ramnagar. As this Chief was put to death, Gujar Singh retired from the siege and making over his possessions to Fateh Singh died of rage and grief shortly after at Lahore in 1788 and his ashes were buried under the Sammanburj of the Lahore fort.

Fateh Singh's nomination as Gujar Singh's successor was not approved of by the Khalsa. So they elected Sahib Singh as their leader. Mahan Singh, to serve his own ends, sided with Fateh Singh against his own sister's husband and a battle was fought in 1792 at Sodhra between Sahib Singh and Mahan Singh in which Mahan Singh fell ill and retired, leaving the field to the Bhangi Chief. Sahib Singh ruled over his territories successfully for many years and was one of the Sikh Sardars† who in 1798 defeated Shahanchi whom Shah Zaman had left with a force of 7,000 strong to subdue the Punjab. Afterwards, in 1800 as narrated above, he joined a conspiracy to kill Ranjit Singh but became a friend

* Amritsar had four forts, in the north Charat Singh had built one and in the south the Bhangis. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia had one in the east and Gujar Singh now built one in the west. This fact gives a glimpse into the federal character of Sikh government before Ranjit Singh.

† The others were Nihal Singh and Wazir Singh both of Atari, Jodh Singh of Wazirabad and Karm Singh of Dhillon.

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of his at Bhasin. By 1806 he had become a vassal of the Maharaja who gave him in 1810 a jagir of one lakh of rupees which he enjoyed till his death in the following year. Fateh Singh went to Kapurthala and entered the Raja's service there. He died soon after leaving a son named Jaimal Singh who died in 1871 a very poor man. Jaimal's son was Jwala Singh who had a son named Budh Singh, the last known representative of the family.

II.—THE AHLUWALIA MISAL.

The Ahluwalia Misal was founded by Jassa Singh Kalal. His parents belonged to the village Ahlu. His mother was a sister of Bhag Singh, a notorious free-booter, who had received the *pahul* from Nawab Kapur Singh. Jassa Singh who was born in 1718 inherited all the qualities of his uncle and in his day became one of the greatest Sikh Chiefs and in one respect the most remarkable of them. It was he who first gave the character of royalty to the Khalsa as he was the first among the Sikhs to strike a coin in his own name. He was a man of great military talents and though he had begun his career as a trooper of Nawab Kapur Singh he set up his independence after the Nawab's death and soon conquered Ahlu, Sariala, Sillewala, Bhupala, Gogarwal, etc. On the other side of the Beas he took Sultanpore, Talwandi, and levied tribute from Rai Ibrahim of Kapurthala which he annexed in 1777 making it his head-quarters. On the other side of the Sutlej he held Isa Khan and Jigraon, and was considered the greatest Chief in Bist Jullundhur. He was called King by his followers though not by the general body of the Khalsa, and was a man of very generous habits enriching his followers with liberal gifts. He was a great patriot and always ready to risk his life and liberty for the sake of his countrymen of his own faith. Once upon a time Ahmad Shah was carrying away as booty a large number of women and girls from India.

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News was brought to Jassa Singh. He started in pursuit of the Shah and making a successful night attack upon his camp rescued the innocent creatures and providing them liberally with money and other necessaries sent them all under proper escort to their respective homes. This act of courage and patriotism not only endeared Jassa Singh to all classes of Hindus and increased his power and influence but also tended to enhance the prestige and popularity of the Sikh religion and Sikh Government.

Jassa Singh died at Amritsar in 1783, and was succeeded by Bhag Singh, a cousin of his. This Chief did not acquire any new territory but was most of the time engaged in fighting with the rival Chief, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia. His General, Hamir Singh, was defeated by the Ramgarhias in 1801. He hastened to Phagwara leading a forlorn hope against the enemy but fell ill on the way and was brought back to Kapurthala where he died the same year.

Fateh Singh, his only son, succeeded to the estate of Bhag Singh. He was a remarkably able man and if he had possessed the bold and masterful character of Ranjit Singh *he* would have been the Maharaja of the Punjab. Ranjit Singh recognised his great qualities of head and heart and made an early alliance with him. The two Chiefs swore perpetual friendship on the Granth and exchanged turbans which according to the orthodox usage formed a sign and tie of brotherhood. Fateh Singh proved of great help to Ranjit Singh and conquered a large territory for him. After a strenuous career of warfare on behalf of the Maharaja he reigned peacefully during the last sixteen or seventeen years of his life in Kapurthala where he died in 1837. His descendants have been ruling in the Kapurthala State ever since that year as the faithful allies of the English Government.*

* During the first Sikh war, however, Nihal Singh, the then Raja, fought against the English in the battles of Aliwal and Budhowal.

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III.—THE RAMGARHIA MISAL.

Jassa Singh, a carpenter by caste, was the founder of this Misal. His father Bhagwana had been a poor carpenter but a zealous Sikh, called for his knowledge of the Granth Bhagwana Gyani. He had five sons Tara Singh, Mali Singh, Khushal Singh, Jassa Singh and Jai Singh. Jassa Singh and his brothers were at first in the service of Adeena Beg, the Foujdar of Jullundur Doab, and Jassa Singh held the command of Adeena's Sikh contingent. When Prince Tymur came to Jullundhur Adeena fled to the hills and Jassa Singh and his brothers went to Amritsar and entered the service of Nand Singh Sanghani. Nand Singh and Jassa Singh restored the fortress of Ram Rauni, but it was destroyed by Adeena's general Mir Aziz Bakhshi who was sent to punish the Sikhs for their disregard of him after the conquest of Lahore in 1758. He, however, died the same year and Jassa Singh rebuilt the fortress and now called it Ramgarh from which the name of the Misal is derived. Jassa now combined with the Kanhias and took Dinanagar, Batala, Kalanour, Sri Hargovindpore, Qadian, Ghumman and many other towns of Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts and some territory in the Jullundur Doab. His revenues now amounted to between six and ten lakhs.

The rising power of Jassa Singh seems to have turned his brothers' heads. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, at this time one of the most powerful and universally revered of Sikh Chiefs, was going on a pilgrmiage when Khushal Singh, Mali Singh and Tara Singh fell upon him, robbed him and brought him home as a prisoner. He was enraged and swore that he would destroy the Ramgarhia Misal one day. Soon afterwards, the Bhangis under Jhanda Singh, the Kanhias under Jai Singh and Hakikat Singh, Sukerchakias under Charat Singh and Sardar Nahar Singh of Chimyari joined Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and defeated the Ramgarhias, driving Jassa

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Singh beyond the Sutlej. The Ramgarhia Chief settled in Sirsa where he remained up to 1783. He subsisted by robbery and extended his depredations up to Delhi and even Meerut. Once he fell upon the Moghul Muhalla in Delhi and carried away four guns with other booty. The Nawab of Meerut paid him a tribute of Rs. 10,000 to save his country from being plundered. He sacked Hissar and rescued two Brahmin girls from the Hakim of the place who had forcibly carried them away. He also found 5 lakhs of *Ashrafees* buried in a well in the same town. In 1783 famine and drought drove him back from Sirsa. Dissensions had meanwhile sprung up between Mahan Singh and Jai Singh. So he made common cause with Mahan Singh and Raja Sansar Chand Katoch who had been cheated of the Kangra fort by Jai Singh, and drove out the Kanhias recovering all his previous possessions.

In 1796 Ranjit Singh's mother-in-law Sadakaur whose husband Gurbakhsh Singh Kanhia had been killed in a battle with Jassa Singh Ramgarhia attacked Jassa Singh at Miani, in Hoshiarpore district with the aid of her son-in-law. Being hard pressed Jassa Singh entreated Baba Sahib Singh Bedi to intercede on his behalf, but the obstinate Sadakaur was obdurate and did not listen to the advice of the holy man. It is said that the Baba cursed her. At any rate what happened was no less than miraculous. In a few days the river Beas swelled with inundation and all the bag and baggage of Sadakaur and his son-in-law was carried away and it was with difficulty that they themselves escaped with their lives.

Jassa Singh ruled in peace after this till 1803 when he died. His son Jodh Singh made his submission to Ranjit and became a vassal of the Maharaja in 1808. Jassa Singh's own descendants are not much heard of but his brother

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Tara Singh's family as represented by Sardar Mangal Singh, C.I.E., is very well-known in the Punjab.

IV.—THE NAKAI MISAL.

This Misal was founded by Hira Singh, son of Chaudhuri Hem Raj, a Sindhu Jat of Bharwal, a village in the Chunian tahsil of the Lahore district. Like all other founders of ruling families in the Punjab he began his career as a free-booter and gradually conquered a territory which yielded him nine lakhs of revenue.

About 1767 complaints were brought to him by the Hindus of Pakpattan against Shaikh Shuja, the incumbent of the shrine of Baba Farid Shakarganj, who was notorious for injuring the feelings of the Hindus by the slaughter of cows. Hira Singh collected his troops and attacked the Shaikh with a force of 2,000 men. Early in the engagement, however, he received a bullet-wound in the head of which he died. His army was dispersed by the Shaikh who pursued the Sikhs with 4,000 horsemen and killed a large number of them.

Dal Singh, the minor son of Hira Singh, was passed over, and Nahar Singh, the son of his brother Natha Singh, succeeded to the Sardari. He was killed a few months after in 1768 in a battle at Kot Kamalia and was succeeded by his younger brother Ram Singh. Ram Singh and his successors passed their lives in fighting with Wazir Singh of Sayyadwala and his descendants.

The Misal had ruled for about forty years over a territory consisting of Chunian, Kasur, Sharakpur, Gugera and at one time, Kot Kamalia. Gian Singh who had ascended the gaddi in 1790 married his sister Raj Kauran* to Ranjit Singh who

* This is the lady who became known as Mai Nakain whose Haveli, now a plot of *Nazul* ground, was situated in Wachhowali, Lahore.

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became the mother of Kharak Singh. Gian Singh was the last independent Sardar of the Nakai Misal and three years after his death in 1807, Ranjit Singh took possession of their territories, leaving a jagir of Rs. 15,000 to Kahn Singh,* son of Gian Singh, who was the last member of the Misal possessing any political importance.

V.—THE KANHIA MISAL.

The founder of this Misal was Jai Singh, son of a poor Sindhu Jat named Khushali, a native of Kanha, a village about fifteen miles from Lahore, which gave the Misal its name. Jai Singh had two brothers, Jhanda Singh and Singha, but the latter has left no mark in history though it is only *his* descendants who have survived. Jai Singh and Jhanda Singh took service with Nawab Kapur Singh, but when the Nawab died both the brothers went to Sohian, a village nine miles from Amritsar, where Jai Singh had been married. There he got together some four hundred horsemen and began to possess himself of the neighbouring country.

In 1763 he joined the leaders of the Ahluwalia, Bhangi, and Ramgarhia Misals in the siege and plunder of Kasur. He was present at the siege of Jammu and took part in the conspiracy hatched for the assassination of Jhanda Singh Bhangi. Having removed one formidable rival, Jai Singh made a league with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia to remove Jassa Singh Ramgarhia against whom the Ahluwalia Chief had a score of his own to settle. The carpenter was driven to the wastes of Hansi and Hissar as shown above and Jai Singh now occupied almost the paramount position in the Punjab.

Next he marched to Sarhind and took part in the great battle in which Zen Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, was

* Kahn Singh died at Lahore in 1872. The family is now represented by Sardar Udham Singh of Bahrwal.

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defeated and slain and the city taken by the Sikhs. After this he took Garota, Hajipur, Nurpur, Datarpur and Saipah levying tribute from the Rajas of these hill States. He also took Mukerian reducing the Awan rulers of the place to subjection after a desperate struggle and great slaughter. Soon afterwards fortune placed another big prize in his way in the form of the famous Kangra fort. Raja Sansar Chand Katoch had always kept a greedy eye on this fort, but Sef Ali, the Governor, claimed the protection of the Delhi Court which had deterred the Katoch from taking any steps to attack the fort. Jai Singh's fame was now on its zenith, so Sansar Chand sought his help and summoned him to assist him in the reduction of the fort. The Kanhia Chief lost no time in accepting the proposal and sent his son to the fort with a large army. The old Killadar died in 1774 and partly by force and partly by diplomacy* the fort was taken and retained for himself by the Sikh Chief. The Katoch was checkmated and greatly disappointed, but seeing no hope in resistance submitted to the Kanhia Chief. Kangra fort was the key† to the whole Kangra valley and the possession of it made Jai Singh the sovereign lord of all the Rajas and Thakurs of the neighbouring States.

Jassa Singh carpenter and Jai Singh had been friends but a quarrel arose between them over the booty of Kasur, so that, as stated above, Jai Singh allied himself with the Chiefs of Ahluwalia and Bhangi clans and turned out the carpenter from the Punjab. Jai Singh, however, now created another enemy, possessing much more tact and far greater resources. This was no other than Mahan Singh, the father of Ranjit Singh. The quarrel arose over the booty of Jammu

* Jiwan Khan, the son of Sef Khan, was bribed by Jai Singh.

† The fort was more than a thousand years old. It had been repaired by Ranjit Singh and was in excellent condition until it was destroyed by the earthquake of 1905.

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which was run over by Mahan Singh in 1780. The Kanhia Chief had always regarded Mahan Singh as a protege of his and the conquest and plunder of Jammu on his own account naturally incensed the old warrior. Mahan Singh was frightened and hastened to Amritsar to tender his apologies to Jai Singh, but the old Sardar covered his face with his *chadar* as he lay in his bed and refused to exchange a word with Mahan Singh.* Mahan Singh was on the point of being taken a prisoner when he was apprised of his dangerous situation. He fled from Amritsar and began to concert measures to take revenge upon his proud old patron. He found ready allies in Jassa Singh carpenter and Raja Sansar Chand Katoch who had been cheated out of Kot Kangra by the Kanhia Sardar. A battle was fought in 1784 at Batala. The only son of Jai Singh was killed by an arrow of a follower of Guru Sundar Dass. Jai Singh was defeated and heart-broken and saw no alternative but to make peace with his enemies. He surrendered Kot Kangra to the Katoch Chief and restored the old possessions of Jassa Singh Ramgarhia while in order to secure the goodwill of Mahan Singh he betrothed his little grand-daughter Mahtab Kaur to Ranjit Singh the four year old son of Mahan Singh.

Jai Singh never recovered his former power and died in 1789. His daughter-in-law, Sada Kaur, succeeded to the Sardari. She was a most capable and statesmanlike woman and ruled her possessions with great ability till 1820 when her estates were annexed by her son-in-law Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Gurbakhsh Singh had no male issue and with his death the line of Jai Singh came to an end. Jai Singh's second brother, Jhanda Singh, had died in childhood, but his youngest brother Singha had a son Hem Singh whose descendants now represent the Kanhia Misal.

*Ali-ud-Din's *Ibratnama*.

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Sardar Kahn Singh is the head of the family and enjoys the village of Rukhanwala in the Chunian colony as a *jagir*.

VI.—THE DALLEWALIA MISAL.

The Misal was founded by one Golaba, a Khatri of Dallewal, a small village on the Ravi near Dera Baba Nanak. He became a Sikh and having changed his name to Golab Singh he became like all founders of ruling families a robber. By this means he amassed immense wealth and collected a large body of troops with whose help he carved out a small principality for himself. His second in command was one Tara Singh *Ghaiba** who succeeded him on his death. This Tara Singh seems to have been a very clever and enterprising man. He was only a shepherd by origin but even in that humble station he had given promise of his future greatness. His village lay on one side of a deep ravine across which there was rich pasture land. He contrived to span over the glen by means of an improvised bridge of ropes over which he transported his flocks every morning and evening. This ingenious bit of engineering won for him the title of Ghaiba, the wonderful. When he succeeded to the Sardari of the Misal he joined the Bhangis and others in the expedition against Kasur and during the plunder of the town lighted upon ornaments worth four lakhs besides cash and other valuable property. He strengthened his Misal by converting Gauhar Das, the influential Chaudhuri of Ganj who with all his followers took the *pahul* and joined the Dallewalia Misal. Tara Singh was also present in the sack of Sarhind. He had now about 3,000 horsemen under his command and Fatehabad and the whole of the neighbouring country was brought under subjection by him.

By this time, however, Ranjit Singh had begun the task of consolidating the Sikh empire and an expedition under Fateh Singh Ahluwalia was sent against the Dallewalia

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Chief. Tara Singh fled and was dispossessed of his estates which became a part of the Sikh Kingdom. On the death of Tara Singh his sons, Daswanda Singh and Chanda Singh, received some villages in jagir from Ranjit Singh, but being dissatisfied with their conduct, the Maharaja confiscated their possessions and bestowed them upon Baba Bikrama Singh Bedi. The Misal then came to an end.

VII.—THE NISHANWALIA MISAL.

The importance of this Misal lay in the fact that its founder Sangat Singh of Amballa used to carry the national banner of the Sikhs whenever they assembled for a military operation. Sangat Singh had his possessions on the other side of the Sutlej and used to carry on depredations in the territory of the United Provinces. Mohar Singh succeeded Sangat Singh. But he died without accomplishing anything notable. As he left no issue the Misal was practically left without a leader. Just about that time Ranjit Singh was hovering about the bank of the Sutlej. He thought this a capital opportunity and sent his famous General Mohkum Chand at the head of a strong force to reduce the Misal. The Dewan gained an easy victory. The Nishanwalias were driven from the field and the Misal ceased to exist. This was in the year 1808 A. D.

VIII.—THE SINGHPURIA MISAL.

This Misal was founded by the famous *Nawab* Kapur Singh. It has been mentioned above* how Kapur Singh, a poor jat of Faizullahpur, rose to the position of one of the most powerful chiefs in the Punjab. The robes of honour and title of Nawab were sent by the Delhi Government to the Sikh assembly at Amritsar. No one would consent to accept either the title or the robes. Kapur Singh was moving the

* See p. 125 and note.

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pankha. It was suggested half-jestingly that the title of Nawab should be conferred on him. He was then decorated with the robes of honour and since that moment became known as Nawab Kapur Singh. Jesters sometimes prove good prophets and the man's ambition and fortunes rose with the mock-dignity conferred on him by his brethren-in-arms. He got together a number of fighting men and wrested his native village of Faizullahpur from its founder and owner Faizullah and changed its name to Singhpur which gave its name to the Misal.* He conquered the neighbouring country and raised the strength of his army to 2,500 horsemen who emulated their leader in reckless daring, fanaticism and ferocity. With the help of these ironsides he scoured the country from the outskirts of Amritsar to the walls of Delhi. As mentioned above he was the most powerful Sikh chief before Jassa Singh Kalal and Ala Singh of Patiala rose to eminence. He enjoyed a great reputation as being the holiest man among the Khalsa for having killed with his own hand as many as five hundred Mussalmans. It was considered of great merit to receive the *Pahul* from his hand and there is no doubt that out of those initiated by him a large number rose to be powerful chiefs.

After Banda it was he who had organised the first regular Sikh army, called the *Khalsa Dal,* and it was his courage, earnestness and fanaticism which had inspired the Sikh leaders to carve out principalities for themselves. After him Sikh states rose like mushrooms all over the Punjab.

Nawab Kapur Singh died at Amritsar in 1753 bequeathing the honours which he enjoyed in the Sikh army to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. He made over to him the steel *mace*† of

* The Misal is sometimes also called Faizullahpuria, from the original name of the village. The village is situated near Amritsar.

† This weapon is still kept in the Akal Bunga at Amritsar,

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Guru Govind Singh and hailed him as the future leader of the Khalsa.

It was, however, his nephew, Khushal Singh, who succeeded to his territory. This chief equalled his uncle in wisdom and bravery and extended his conquests on both sides of the Sutlej. His possessions included Jullundur, Nurpur, Barhampur, Bharatgarh, Patti, &c. Like his illustrious predecessor he made many converts, Ala Singh, the Raja of Patiala, being one of them. Khushal Singh died in 1795 and was succeeded by his son Budh Singh. But Ranjit Singh was at this time absorbing all the petty Sikh States and the possessions of Budh Singh formed no exception. The whole of his territory on this side of the Sutlej was taken and the Sardar was obliged to retire to the British territory where he lived peacefully until his death in 1816.

IX.—THE KARORA SINGHI MISAL.

This Misal, also called *Panjgarhia* from the native village of its first leader, was founded by one Karori Mal, a Jat of Panjgarh.

He started as a robber of course and succeeded in founding a ruling family with the aid of his famous assistants Mastan Singh and Karm Singh. Having died childless he was succeeded by Bhagel Singh who was the most daring and enterprising of his followers. The Misal attained to great power under this chief, the strength of the army rising to 12,000 strong and its possessions extending from the Sutlej to the Jullundur Doab, its chief place being Chandali near Karnal.

From a national point of view, however, the name of Bhagel Singh is hardly honoured among the Sikhs. He it was who first joined the imperial army when Prince Jawan Bakht marched out against the Sikhs at the head of a force 20,000 strong. The imperial army at first gained some victories but was ultimately routed by the combined troops

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of the Raja of Patiala and other Phulkian Chiefs, together with the forces of the Kanhia and Ramgarhia Misals. During this campaign lasting throughout the winter of 1778-79 Bhagel Singh always fought against his co-religionists on the side of the Government of Delhi.

Then again it was Bhagel Singh who welcomed and supported the Mahrattas when they invaded the Sikh territories in 1788 under Amba Rao.

On the death of Bhagel Singh the leadership of the *Misal* fell to Jodh Singh, son of Gurbakhsh Singh, the founder of Kalsia family, who was a comrade and great friend of Bhagel Singh. Jodh Singh was a clever man and considerably extended his possessions. He did not spare even the possessions of the Phulkian Chiefs who, tired of his frequent incursions into their country, bought him off by making a matrimonial alliance with him, the Raja of Patiala giving his daughter's hand to his son Hari Singh. Soon after, however, Jodh Singh became a vassal of Ranjit Singh and was present with his contingent at the siege of Naraingarh in 1807 and the siege of Multan in 1818 when he died. At his death his territory passed into the hands of the Chief of Kalsia who is still among the ruling Chiefs of the Punjab.

X.—THE SHAHID AND NIHANG MISAL.

This Misal does not deserve more than a passing notice. It had considerable possessions on the east bank of the Sutlej, and, under Karm Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh, commanded an army of 2,000 horsemen, but its chief importance lay in the fact that it was composed of those fanatical priests who claimed descent from Sikh martyrs and considered it their duty to preserve the pristine purity of Sikhism as established by Guru Govind Singh. The Nihangs or Akalis as they are otherwise called are a dying race now, but their name will always live in history owing to the exploits of Phula Singh one of the great generals of Ranjit Singh.

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XI.—THE PHULKIA MISAL.

The Phulkia Misal is the most important of all in as much as the head of this Misal was the first among the Sikhs to be acknowledged as an independent ruler by Muhammadans as well as the Sikhs themselves.

The founder of this *Misal* was one Phul, a *Sindhu* Jat, born in 1619. He is supposed to have been the thirtieth in descent from Jesal, the founder of Jesalmir. There is little doubt that Phul belonged to a distinguished family as he is said to have been specially honoured by Shahjahan. Phul seems to have early displayed a liking for the Sikh tenets and won the favour of Guru Hargovind who is said to have prophesied a great future for Phul and his descendants. The prophesy was amply fulfilled, for the sons of Phul became the ancestors of the ruling families of Patiala, Jind and Nabha called after him the Pulkian States and the famous chiefs of Bhador, Malor, and Jiandan, &c.

Phul passed his time in fighting the Muhammadan Rajputs of Jesalmir and the Imperial Governor at Jagraon, and was ultimately taken prisoner by Governor of Sarhind. He died in 1652 of apoplexy.*

Phul was succeeded by his son Ram Chand who was a fine soldier and a capable leader. He was constantly busy in fighting with the Bhattis and the Chief of Kot every one of whom he humbled to the dust, until he was assassinated by the sons of one Chain Singh one of his own lieutenants whom he had put to death. This was in 1714 A. D. in the 75th year of his life.

Ram Chand was succeeded by his third son, the famous Ala Singh, born 1695 A. D. under whom the Sikhs for the

* According to a popular tradition, he was a Yogi and when called upon to pay the tribute he withdrew his breath into his brain and feigned death. None of his attendants being aware of his powers as a Yogi, he was taken for dead and cremated before the opening of his Samadhi.

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first time attained the position of an independent nation. After a desultory warfare with his Mussalman neighbours and rivals Ala Singh came in collision with Nawab Asad Ali, the Imperial Governor of Jullundur Doab whom he defeated after a desperate battle and great slaughter, the Nawab himself being among the slain. This victory gained in 1731 over the combined armies of Bhatti Rajputs and imperial troops immensely increased the prestige of Ala Singh and crowds of Sikhs from both sides of the Sutlej rallied round his standard. His fame reached Delhi, and the Emperor Muhammad Shah apprehending a potential enemy in Ala Singh decided to win him over and sent a *firman* (dated 21st Ramzan, 1137, H.*) and his envoys to him asking for his aid in the management of Sarhind and promising him the title of Raja if he satisfied the Delhi Court by his conduct.

The next eighteen years of his life were spent in fighting with his hereditary enemies the Bhattis and the imperial Foujdar at Sarhind. By the latter he was taken prisoner but was released by the diplomacy and sacrifice of a devoted follower. In 1749 he built the fort of Bhowanigarh, and in 1752 he took the district of Sanawar comprising eighty-four villages. One of these villages was Patiala which is now the capital of the State of the same name. Here he built a mud fort called *Garhi Sodhian*, the remains of which are still to be seen. In 1757 he defeated the Bhattis and the Moghul Governor of Hissar after a deadly struggle of eight days.

The successes of the Sikhs, especially those of Ala Singh, attracted the attention of Ahmad Shah Durrani to the Punjab. He hastened to the rescue of Foujdar of Sarhind in 1762 and defeated the Sikhs in a pitched battle near Ludhiana in which the Sikhs lost thousands in killed and

* Muhammad Latif, p. 326.

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wounded.* Ala Singh was taken prisoner but the Durrani was so struck by his manly bearing that he released him on payment of a fine of four lakhs by Rani Fatto, wife of Ala Singh. His independence was acknowledged and robes of honour were conferred on him by the King who embraced him in a most friendly manner.

Ala Singh died in 1765 and was succeeded by his son Amar Singh. Meanwhile the power of the Sikhs was increasing very fast in the Punjab, so that when the Durrani King who was rapidly declining in years came to India again in 1767 he did not think it advisable to interfere with Amar Singh's military operations. On the other hand, he thought it politic to make the best of the bad job and making it a virtue of necessity confirmed him, so to say, in his sovereignty and presented him with a flag and a drum, the insignia of Royalty. Amar Singh's right to strike coin in his own name was also acknowledged.

Amar Singh began his military career by invading Malerkotla, killing its Chief Jamal Khan in battle. Soon after he seized the forts of Sefabad and Sirsa, took Mani Majra and Kot Kapura, overran Faridkot and annexed Bhatinda deposing its Chief Sukhchain whom he granted 12 villages in jagir. Four years after this Amar Singh died of dropsy in 1781.

He was succeeded by his son Sahib Singh, a boy of six years. Momentous changes took place in the reign of this prince. George Thomas, the famous English adventurer, made many inroads into his territory but was bought off by the treaty of 1801. Meanwhile Ranjit Singh turned his attention to the Trans-Sutlej States and Mohkam Chand, his greatest General, was annexing the Trans-Sutlej territory bit by bit. Sahib Singh in his turn attracted the attention of the

* This was the famous *Ghullughara* described above. See p. 154, 155.

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Maharaja but a treaty was signed by both and the two Chiefs swore perpetual friendship, exchanging their turbans in token of brotherhood. The British Government was, however, at this time feeling a great anxiety owing to the rumours about a Napoleonic invasion of India and was taking every possible precaution against the threatened calamity. Negotiations were going on between that Government and Persia and Afghanistan. Lord Minto wanted to make an alliance with Ranjit Singh as well but at the same time did not like the idea of allowing Ranjit Singh to become too strong. It was for this reason that Metcalfe was commissioned to tell the Maharaja to withdraw his troops from the southern side of the Sutlej and try to have a treaty of friendship signed by him. The British Government would, if successful everywhere, have a fourfold cordon between India and Napoleon, *viz.*, Persia, Afghanistan, Ranjit Singh and the South-Sutlej Sikh States. At any rate the ousting of Ranjit Singh from the south side of Sutlej would leave the resources of the powerful Sikh States on the South of the Sutlej under the control and at the disposal of the British Government, besides cripplingly proportionately the power of Ranjit Singh who was rapidly rising into powerful rivalry with the British Government in North India. The diplomacy of Metcalfe, assisted by Ochterloney's military expedition, at last succeeded and the well-known Minto-Metcalfe treaty with Ranjit Singh was signed on 30th of May 1809. By this treaty the Patiala and its kindred States of Nabha and Jhind along with other States beyond the Sutlej passed under the protection of the British Government and have, since then, been, on the whole, the faithful allies of that Government.*

* The twelfth *Misal* was the Suker Chakia Misal from which sprang Ranjit Singh, the Maharaja of all the Sikhs. As the writer proposes to devote the second volume of his work entirely to the history of Ranjit Singh he thinks it better to leave the account of this Misal for that occasion.

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THE PUNJAB ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MISALS.

The Sikh States before the times of Ranjit Singh were small military monarchies. It is, therefore, necessary to start with a brief account of the Sikh armies which were the mainstay of these little kingdoms.

Before the time of Ranjit Singh the army of the Khalsa consisted entirely of *sawars* or horsemen. The horses were generally reared in Lakhee Jungle in the vicinity of Bhatinda and every true member of the Khalsa was supposed to be a horseman. The saddle, in fact, was the home of the Khalsa for several generations. The strength of the Sikh army in 1783 was estimated at 300,000, but might be taken at 200,000.* But its real strength was probably not more than 73,000 horsemen and 25,000 foot, as estimated by Browne,† or more correctly 60,000 horse and 5,000 foot, as given by George Thomas, the English adventurer who had himself come in collision with the Sikhs.

The infantry of which the last mentioned estimate seems to be quite correct was wholly used to garrison forts.‡

The Sikhs probably possessed no cannon before they captured the twelve pieces abandoned at Gujranwala by the defeated army of Lahore under Khawja Obed in 1762. But they do not seem to have used even these in any battle. Up to 1800 A. D. the Sikhs did not possess more than forty pieces of field guns.§ "When equipped for the field they generally carried sword, spear and musket."‖ The Sikhs

* Forster. Journey i. 333.

† India Tracts. Colonel Franklin in his *Life of George Thomas* puts the number of effective troops at 64,000.

‡ Cunningham.

§ Francklin (Life of George Thomas) who quotes George Thomas himself.

‖ Syed Muhammad Latif.

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speedily became famous for the effective use of the match-lock when mounted and this skill is said to have descended to them from their ancestors, in whose hands the bow was a deadly weapon.*

In the early days the Sikhs had no decent uniforms. The common trooper was clad in Pagri or turban, a Kurta or shirt and a pair of knickerbockers, with tight-fitting slippers. The chiefs probably wore chain armour together with a steel helmet, breast-plates, back-plates, wrist-guards and greaves. An illustration of their arms and armour current in Ranjit Singh's time is herewith appended.†

The Sikhs never knew what drill was before they were disciplined by Ranjit Singh with the help of deserters from British Indian army and some French, Italian and American officers, some of whom had been in Napoleonic wars. The place of discipline was supplied by enthusiasm and courage. Every one knew that he had to conquer or to die. Still, however, every expedition was headed by one chief, elected to the command by the other chiefs who took instructions from him and commanded their own respective contingents, much of course being left to the discretion of the subordinate officers themselves.

The national flag of the Sikhs was of saffron colour, the colour of the ancient Hindu flag, but I have not been able to discover if it had any design or heraldic sign.

The war cry of the Sikhs was *Sat Sri Akal*‡ and *Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wah Guru ji ki Fateh."*§

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* Cunningham.

† It is a copy of the illustration given in Osborne's *Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh* and is, perhaps, his own drawing.

‡ True is the blessed Lord.

§ Lord's is the Khalsa, Lord's be the victory.

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The mode of fighting followed by the Sikhs is thus described by Major Francklin.*

"The Sikhs are armed with a spear, matchlock and scimitar, their method of fighting as described by Mr. Thomas is singular. After performing the requisite duties of their religion by ablution and prayer, they comb their hair and beard with peculiar care. Then mounting their horses ride forth towards the enemy with whom they engage in a continued skirmish advancing and retreating, until man and horse become equally fatigued. They then draw off to some distance from the enemy, and meeting with cultivated ground, they permit their horses to graze of their own accord while they parch a little grain for themselves and after satisfying nature by this frugal repast, if the enemy be near, they renew the skirmishing; should he have retreated, they provide forage for their cattle and endeavour to procure a meal for themselves. Seldom indulging in the comforts of a tent whilst in the enemy's country, the repast of a Sikh cannot be supposed to be either sumptuous or elegant. Seated on the ground with a mat spread before them, a Brahmin, appointed for the purpose, serves out a portion of food to each individual, the cakes of flour which they eat during the meal serving them in the room of dishes and plates. Accustomed from their earliest infancy to a life of hardship and difficulty the Sikhs despise the comforts of a tent. In lieu of this each horseman is furnished with two blankets, one for himself and the other for his horse. These blankets which are placed beneath the saddle with a grain bag and heel ropes comprise in time of war the whole baggage of a Sikh. Their cooking utensils are carried on *tattoos* (or ponies)."

MODE OF GOVERNMENT.

It has been pointed out that Govind Singh turned Sikhism into a theocracy. The whole nation had a living

* Memoirs of George Thomas, p. 71.

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faith that it was under the special protection of God. Next to God was the Guru who was supposed to be always aiding and guarding his followers. The sovereignty of the nation was vested in the general body of the nation itself. The twelve misals were controlled by powerful chiefs but these chiefs exercised their sway with the goodwill of their followers, who always went through the ceremony of electing their chiefs. That these elections were not always nominal is shown by the fact that many times the heirs apparent were set aside and a really capable ruler was elected from among the descendants or relations of the deceased chief and sometimes even from among the troops themselves.*

The affairs affecting the whole nation were settled by a council of all the chiefs, held at Amritsar, under the name of *Gurmata*, during the Dussehra holidays, a military festival still observed in Hindu States with great eclat, and celebrated by holding special darbars and reviews of the State troops. The *Gurmata* was summoned by Akalis or warrior priests who owed no allegiance to anybody, held charge of the temple and devoted themselves to the service of the nation by punishing dissenters and traitors and keeping up, by precept and by example, the religious fervour and fighting zeal of the Khalsa. The proceedings of the council are thus described by Malcolm :—

"When the chiefs meet upon this solemn occasion it is concluded that all private animosities cease, and that every man sacrifices his personal feelings at the shrine of the general good, and actuated by principles of pure patriotism thinks of nothing but the interests of religion and the commonwealth to which he belongs. When the chiefs and principal leaders are seated, the *Adigranth* and *Daswen Padshah ka Granth* are placed before them. They all bend

* Mufti Ali-ud-Din. *Ibrat Nama.*

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their heads before these scriptures and exclaim *Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa, etc. Karah Prasad** next receives the salutation of the assembly who then rise and the Akalis pray aloud." The members resume their seats after the prayer and *Karah Prasad* is then distributed and eaten together "in token of their general and complete union in one cause." The Akalis then exclaim, "Sirdars (chiefs) this is a *Gurmata*," on which prayers are again said aloud. The chiefs then draw closer and say to each other "The sacred Granth is betwixt us, let us swear by our scripture to forget all internal disputes and to be united."

"This moment of religious fervour and ardent patriotism is taken to reconcile all animosities. They then proceed to consider the danger with which they are threatened, to settle the best plans for averting it and to choose the generals who are to lead their armies against the common enemy. The first *Gurmata* was held by Guru Govind, and the latest (up to 1805) was called in 1805 when the British army pursued Holkar into the Punjab."†

In the internal affairs of his territory each chief was independent. All booty was equally divided by the chiefs who further divided it among their followers. These followers were not serfs, but exactly like feudal retainers, holding lands on condition of military service, with this exception that every one was free to leave his master and go to another, this circumstance giving another proof of the oneness of the whole Sikh nation in which every member believed.

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* A sort of pudding made of equal parts of wheaten flour, sugar, and clarified butter. It still forms an essential part of all important ceremonies observed by the Sikhs.

† Malcolm. *Sketch of the Sikhs* (pp. 77, 78).

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The revenues of the chiefs were of two kinds, those received from the country occupied by them and the "Rakhi" or protection money levied from the country subdued but not occupied by the Sikhs. The Rakhi money ranged between one-fifth and one-half of the rental or government share of the produce.* As regards the other kind of revenues "It is stated to be a general rule," says Malcolm, "that the chiefs to whom the territories belong should receive one-half of the produce and the farmer the other: but the chief never levies the whole of his share: and in no country, perhaps, is the rayat or cultivator treated with more indulgence."† The taxes on trade were at first heavy but the Sikh chiefs soon "discovered the injury which their interests have suffered from this cause, and have endeavoured and not without success, to restore confidence to the merchant, and great part of the shawl trade now flows through the cities of Lahore, Amritsar and Patiala, to Hindustan." Every major and minor chief exercised by prescription the privilege of taxing trade, yet the duties though levied at every ten to twenty miles were light.

Beema or insurance could be had at a cheep rate from the *nauriah* merchants to all parts of India.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

Cases of property and other civil suits were decided by the Panchayat, or Court of Five, consisting of the leading men of the village. "As they are always chosen from men of the best reputation in the place where they meet, this court has a

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* Cunningham.

† Sketch, p. 80. "Grain pays in kind being assessed by appraisement, sugarcane, cotton, poppy, etc., are assessed at fixed rates and pay in cash (Murray).

† *Ibid.*

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high character for justice."* Any case could also be taken to the chief. Criminal justice was administered by the chief.

"Crimes and trespasses, as in the middle ages, are atoned for by money: the fines are unlimited by any rule, and generally levied arbitrarily according to the means of the offender whose property is attached and his family placed under restraint to enforce payment.

He who gains his point pays his *shukrana* or present of gratitude and he who has lost pays his *jareemana* or penalty. All officers under the chief and employed by him in districts and departments follow his example, but if guilty of excesses are ultimately thrown into a *bora* (bhora) or dungeon and required to refund, and when they have satisfied the cupidity of their superior they are generally permitted to resume their functions, honoured with the shawl as a mark of favour.

Capital punishment is very seldom inflicted. The most incorrigible culprits are punished with the loss of either one or both hands and deprivation of nose or ears,† but mutilation is rare for whoever has the means to pay or can procure a respectable security to pay for him within a given time may expiate the most heinous transgression.

Highway robbery.—On the commission of a *dakka* or highway robbery, the chief within whose jurisdiction the act has been perpetrated is called upon to make restitution and, should he decline, the chief whose subject has suffered resorts to the *lex talionis* and drives off several hundred head of cattle or retaliates in some way or other.

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* Malcolm; *Sketch*, p. 81.

† Statutes were passed in the reign of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Elizabeth and James I, sanctioning and directing the loss of the right and left hand and of an ear, for offences which would by a Sikh scarcely be deemed deserving the infliction of a mulct.—Murray.

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Petty theft.—"When a petty theft is substantiated either through the medium of a *muhurkhaee* or the production of a *moodoo* or *namuna* (the confession of one of the thieves or a part of the stolen property), the sufferer has generally, as a preliminary, to pay the *chuharam* or a fourth as a perquisite to the chief or his *thanadar* ere he can recover the amount of his losses. Independent of this the *muhurkhaee* or approver generally stipulates for a full pardon and that no demand shall be made on the confessing delinquent for his *kundee, viz.*, any or such portion of the property as may have accrued to him as his dividend of the spoil. This share of the spoil becomes chargeable to the other thieves and on settling accounts it is distributed equally amongst them."

Stolen Cattle.—In all cases of stolen cattle it is an established rule when the *suragh khoj* or trace of the footsteps is carried to the gate or into the fields of any village the zamindars of that village must either shew the track beyond their own boundary and allow the village to be searched or pay the value of the cattle.*

Succession to landed property.—The rules of succession to landed property in the Sikh States are arbitrary and are variously modified in accordance with the usages, the interests and prejudices of different families, nor is it practicable to reduce the anomalous system to a fixed and leading principle. A distinction obtains in the canons of inheritance between the Majha and Malwa Sikhs.

"The practice of succession to property both real and personal amongst the Majha Sikhs is by *Bhaeeband* and *Choondaband*, the first being an equal distribution of all

* Hume in treating of the Anglo-Saxons says: "If any man could track his stolen cattle into another's ground the latter was obliged to show the tracks out of it or pay their value."

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lands, forts, tenements and movables among sons, with, in some instances, an extra or double share to the eldest termed *Kharch Sardari* assimilating to the double share in the law of Moses.

Choondaband is an equal division among mothers for their respective male issue. This is in accord with Hindu law.

Where no male issue.—When a Manjha Sikh dies, leaving no male offspring, his brothers, or his nephews of the full blood assume the right of succession to which the widow or widows become competitors. According to Shastras the title of the widows is held prior but the Sikh to avoid it resorts to *Chadarandazi.*

Chadarandazi.—The eldest surviving brother of the deceased places a white robe over and the *nath* or ring in the nose of the widow which ceremony constitutes her his wife.

Where no nephew, &c.—On failure of brothers and nephews the general practice is equal division of lands and personal effects amongst the surviving widows of Manjha Sikhs.

Adoption by widows.—Adoption by the widows is not allowed and the female line is entirely excluded from the succession to prevent the estates merging in the possessions of another family.

Malwa Singhs.—Among the Malwa Singhs the rights of primogeniture in the males are respected and jageers or grants of land are assigned for the maintenance of younger sons. The Malwa Singhs also with the exception of *Bhais* sanction and admit the usage of *karewa,* or widow marriage, thereby opposing a bar to disputed succession between the brothers, nephews and the widows of a deceased chief. The Bhais of Kythul and other places, though against *karewa,*

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set aside the claims of widows and give them small jageers for maintenance.

Muhammadans are allowed to follow their own laws of succession, &c.

Boundary disputes are decided by a convention of neighbouring zemindars, who are bound by a solemn oath to act impartially.*

The litigant made choice of an equal number of munsifs or arbitrators, in some cases, one each, in others, two to three each. Five different modes of accommodation were in general adoption amongst these *punchayats*:

(1) An equal division of the land in dispute.

(2) The *punchayat* selected the oldest and most respectable member of their Committee to define the limit, the others consenting to abide by his award.

(3) A moiety of the line of demarcation was drawn by the arbiters of one party and the remaining portion by the others.

(4) The *punchayat* referred the final adjustment to an old inhabitant of a neighbouring village upon whose local knowledge and experience they placed more reliance than on their own limited information.

(5) It sometimes occurred to the *punchayat* to leave the division in the hands of one of the disputants whose probity and reputation were established in the vicinity.

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* The oath administered to the person who erects the boundary pillars, if a Hindu, is the Ganges water or the Chour (or raw hide of the cow?) or swearing by his son. If a Mussalman, the Qoran or placing his hands on his son's head, the Chour and swearing by his own child are the most binding.

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Boundary disputes and bloodshed.—Bloodshed between zemindars in a boundary dispute is sometimes atoned for by giving a *nata* or daughter in marriage to a relative of the deceased or commuted to the payment of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 or 125 bighas of land. In general, revenge is sought, the blood-money being considered an inadequate recompense.

Islands in a river.—Claims to islands in a river flowing between two manors and to alluvions are determined by what is called the *kuchmuch* or *kishtee bunna* which rule assigns the land to the proprietor of the bank or *imani* upon which alluvion is thrown and from which the water has receded. Island in the centre of a river where water is deep enough for boats to ply becomes the joint property of the chiefs on both banks. In case of diluvion the chief whose land was carried away did not lose his right.

Nuptial contracts, &c.—Breach of promise cases were referred by the chief to *punchayats*. The verdict used to be one of the following :—

(1) Plaintiff was awarded another female from the girl's family.

(2) If no other girl, the defendant must find a substitute.

(3) Damages actually incurred or plus some more money.

Laws of Extradition.—If a woman absconded into other territory there was no help except reprisals, or a request by a *panchayat* to restore the woman. Debtors and revenue defaulters were never given back except at the request of the *panchayat* which gave assurances of the man's safety.

Administration of charity.—There was no poor law.

Every village had a system called *maiba* for incidental expenses called *aya giya* or the expenditure incurred in enter-

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taining guests, including State officials. There were *sada brats* and Thakurdwaras where charity was dispensed to the needy in the form of food and clothes.

LAND TENURE.

There were four kinds of tenures by which land was held under the administration of the Misals, *viz.*: (1) Pattidari, (2) Misaldari, (3) Tabadari, and (4) Jagirdari. Pattidari was the system under which the associates in the Misal, of lower rank than a Sardar, down even to the single horseman held a share in the land belonging to his Misal. "All these (pattidars) regulated entirely the management of their patti (share), fining, confining or even further ill-treating according to their pleasure, any zemindar or working ryot of their allotment. Reciprocal aid for mutual protection and defence was the relation on which a Pattidar stood in other respects to the Sardar, and the only condition of his tenure."*

Misaldari was the tenure under which "Bodies of inferior strength or petty chiefs with their followers attached themselves sometimes to a Misal without subscribing to any conditions of association or dependence. The allotments of land assigned to such would be considered as the free reward of their co-operation and would be held in no sort of dependence. If dissatisfied with his chief a Misaldar might transfer himself with his possessions to another under whose protection and countenance he might prefer to continue."

"A Tabadar was on the other hand a retainer, as the word is understood in Europe, one completely subservient, the lands which were his reward were liable to forfeiture for any act of disobedience or rebellion, and at the caprice of the Sardar might be resumed upon any occasion of displeasure."

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* Prinsep, p. 28.

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"The fourth class of tenures or Jagirs were given to needy relations, dependants, and entertained soldiers who deserved well and the holders were liable to be called upon for their personal service at all times, with their quotas or contingents equipped and mounted at their own charge according to the extent of the grant. These were even further under the power of the Sardar than the Tabadari grants. Both were hereditary only according to his pleasure, the lands of them formed part of the allotment set apart for the Sardari, and the Misal, or Association, had, of course, nothing to say in such assignment."*

* Prinsep, p. 29.

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APPENDIX I.

THE SIKH SCRIPTURES.

Before proceeding with an examination of Sikh doctrines it seems necessary to say a few words about the Sikh Scriptures.

The Sacred books of the Sikhs are two, the Adi Granth and the Dasam Granth, the latter being also known as *Daswen Pádsháh ká Granth* or the Book of the Tenth King.

The Adi Granth commands much more respect, and is much more widely read, forming, in fact, the Bible of the Sikhs. The following points may be considered here in connection with this book :—

I. *Authorship.*—The Granth consists of the works of thirty-six writers who may be classified as follows :—

(*a*) Seven Sikh Gurus, three, *viz.*, the sixth, seventh and eighth contributing nothing, and the tenth only one line which is also of doubtful origin.*

(*b*) Fourteen Bhaktas or Saints, one of whom, *viz.*, Farid was a Muhammadan, if, of course, we except Kabir, who, though born of Muhammadan parents, was a Hindu by faith. Of the rest, four, *viz.*, Jai Dev, Trilochan, Sur Das, and Ramanand were Brahmans, one, *viz.*, Pipa a Raja, two, *viz.*, Bhikam and Beni, of unknown caste, and the other five of the Sudra class, *viz.*, Nam Dev was a calico-printer, Sain a barber,

* Dr. Trumpp says it forms the reply sent by Govind to his father's letter which the latter is said to have written from his captivity. Munshi Sohan Lal also quotes the verse. See his Tarikh-i-Ranjit Singh, F. 69.

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Dhanna a Jat, Sadan a butcher and Ravidas a cobbler.

(c) Fifteen Bhatts* or minstrels, all Brahmans,† whose panegyrics on the first five Gurus were incorporated by the fifth Guru himself. It would thus appear that 75 per cent. of the authors of the Granth were Hindus by faith as well as by birth, if, of course, the Gurus themselves are to be regarded as Sikhs and not as Hindus.

II. *Compilation.*—The work of compilation was done by Arjun, the fifth Guru, who procured the works of the first three Gurus from Mohan, the son of the third Guru, and making selections from the works of the Bhaktas collected them together along with his own and his father's writings, into one volume to which were added the panegyrics of the Bhatts. The poetic name of all the Gurus being Nanak,‡ he added Mahalla I, Mahalla II, and so on, to the works of the first, second and other Gurus respectively to distinguish the one from the other, noting also the name of the *Rag* in which a particular stanza might be most suitably sung. The names of the authors with the names of suitable *Rags* were likewise attached to the works of the various Bhaktas.§ The present arrangement of the Adi Granth is due to the genius of Bhai Mani Singh, the martyr. He recast the whole book

* They are Bhalhau, Bhika, Das, Ganga, Haribans, Jallan, Jalap, Kal, Kalas, Kalashar, Kirat, Mathura, Nal, Rad, Sal.

† According to the author of the Panth Prakash.

‡ It is a belief with the Sikhs that the same spirit descended upon the successors of Nanak, so that, though physically different, they were spiritually all one with the first Guru. Har Govind, the sixth Guru, in his letters to Muhsin Fani, the author of the Dabistan, always signed himself Nanak.

§ Trumpp laments the loss of the works of most of these Bhagats. He might have derived some consolation from the traditions referred to by the author of the Panth Prakash that the portions of the Granth assigned to some of the Bhaktas were in reality composed by Guru Arjun himself.

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and arranged it again so as to group together the works of each writer composed in a particular *Rag*.*

III. *Language*.—The language of the Adi Granth is a mixture of almost all the Aryan languages current in India. There are some stanzas which are very much like Sanskrit, *e.g.*, the contributions of Jai Dev, the famous Jaya Deva, the author of Gita Govinda. One or two stanzas are in pure Persian, which, though full of meaning, can have no pretensions to linguistic excellence. The contributions of Nam Dev and Trilochan, who belonged to the Deccan, bear a strong impress of Marathi on them.

The body of the book is, however, composed in Hindi which is either the pure Hindi of those times used, *e.g.*, in Ramanand and Kabir's works or its corrupted form which may be called the immediate predecessor of the Modern Punjabi.†

The tone of the whole compilation is Hindi in all its details :—

(1) The figures of speech and the parables are generally those taken from the Upanishads or more modern works on the Vedanta Philosophy.

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* This is given on the authority of the author of Panth Prakash. Neither Trumpp nor any other English historian has noticed the fact. The first copy of Adi Granth is in the possession of the Sodhis of Kartarpur which can be seen by offering Karah Prasad worth Re. 1-4-0. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had it sent to Lahore in 1831 A. D. when he bestowed a Jagheer of Rs. 50,000 on its custodians.

† It is remarkable that almost all Bhaktas whether in Bengal or Maharashtra or up in the Punjab wrote their works in the Hindi of those days. Hindi, or rather Hindui, as Trumpp calls the older Hindi, seems to have been the *lingua franca* of India or at any rate to have occupied the position held by Sanskrit in the past, and by English at the present time.

Anyone who wanted to reach larger audiences spoke through the medium of Hindi. This fact is noticed by Trumpp. It is also remarkable that older dialects of the Deccan and the Punjab, &c., were much more akin to Hindi than their present successors.

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(2) The mythological allusions are almost always taken from the Puranas, the personages of semitic mythology being seldom mentioned, except when the person addressed was perhaps a Muhammadan.

(3) The names of God are mostly those used by Hindus, although Allah and Khuda are occasionally met with.

(4) The metres are without exception those employed by Hindu poets. Even the Persian stanza is written in a metre which is more Hindi than Persian.

IV. *Contents.*—To analyse the contents of the Adi Granth is to analyse Sikhism as it existed before the modifications introduced by the new dispensation of the last Guru. As I propose to deal with the subject at some length in the following chapter I think it sufficient to simply enumerate the various parts which form the body of the Adi Granth. They are as follows :—

(1) The *Japji* of Guru Nanak, a devotional piece enjoined to be recited with the morning prayer.

(2) The *So Dar* (that door) consisting of extracts from the body of the book, recited with the evening prayer.

(3) *So Purkh* (that Supreme Being) also recited with evening prayer.

(4) *Sohila* (a song of praise) recited when going to bed.

(5) The body of the book classified according to *Rags*, types or stanzas.

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(6) The *Bhog* or the Epilogue or conclusion consisting of miscellaneous matter containing some pieces by the Gurus themselves, Kabir and Farid and the panegyrics of the Brahman bards.

V. *Nature of the Contents.*—The main part of the book consists of songs in praise of the Supreme Being and the Guru, or prayers,* with a few controversial passages or direct exhortations or sermons. There is absolutely no dissertation on any particular subject and no stories of Gurus' lives or miracles. The very nature of the contents of the Granth could not, therefore, yield to any rigid classification based upon a community or similarity of the subject dealt with. It is, therefore, no wonder that Trumpp complains of a lack of order and classification in the Granth Sahib. The teachings of the Gurus about morality, as well as their doctrines and beliefs, lie scattered all over the book, and must be gathered by a careful study of the whole volume. To me the constitution of the Granth appears to resemble that of the Rig-Veda much more than any other book, with this difference that whereas the Veda generally deals with the same subject in the same stanza, the Granth does not confine itself to any particular subject even in one stanza. All that the Gurus say is, therefore, said indirectly and by implication. They do not assert and expound their beliefs but leave them to be inferred by the reader.

The second sacred book of the Sikhs, as mentioned above is the Granth of the tenth King. It is a miscellaneous collection and only a part forms the Guru's own work, the rest being written by a number of Hindi poets, whom the Guru kept in his service. The collection does not do credit

* Dr. Trumpp says "prayer to the Supreme is hardly ever mentioned in the Granth" (p. cx). The statement is simply absurd, and literally hundreds of prayers to the Supreme could be produced from the book. It simply proves what Professor Max Müller said about Trumpp's untrustworthiness. *Auld Lang Syne*, p. 69.

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to the Guru's name, and much of it, except the Guru's own compositions, might well have been omitted. The book does not command much respect among cultured Sikhs who look upon most of its contents as spurious.

Its literary and poetic merit is, however, very great and some of its portions deserve the very highest place in the ranks of Hindi poetry of the narrative and epic kind.

The book, moreover, serves as an excellent index to the part played in Guru Govind Singh's life and activities by Hindu Theology, Mythology, Philosophy, History and Literature, and as such a brief outline of its contents will not be out of place here.

It is apparently a collection of many books of various sizes. And the subjects dealt with seem to be as various. The main theme, however, of the whole collection is either the glorification of God to the exclusion of all other objects of worship, or the glorification of arms with the object of encouraging the Sikhs to fight bravely. The accounts of the doings of the mythical heroes of the Puranas have all one and the same purpose, the incitement to war and the eulogy of physical strength and courage. The stories of women's wiles also seem to have the same end in view, to warn the Sikhs from falling into their traps. The contents of the books are as follows :—

(1) *Japji.*—A complement of Nanak's Japji, the morning prayer of the Sikhs. It is a vigorous little poem in Sanskritic language, though, to suit the exigencies of rhyme, Persian and even commonplace Punjabi words are introduced. It is supposed to be the Guru's own composition.

(2) *Akala Stuti*, Praises of the Undying One, a hymn to be recited in the morning.*

* Cunningham says "the initiatory verse alone is the composition of Govind." (History of Sikhs, 2nd ed., appendix XVIII).

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(3) *The Vichitra Natak* or the Wondrous Drama, Govind's own composition, forming an account of his family, his mission of reformation and his wars with the hill Rajas and the imperial forces. The account given by the Guru of his previous life and the circumstances which led to his birth reads like an episode from the Puranas, and all its details are saturated with the spirit of Hindu mythology.

(4) *Chandi Charitra* or the "Exploits of Chandi," the goddess, translated from the Sanskrit, according to some, by Govind himself. The wars of the goddess with the demons are described in epic verse of a kind which has no parallel in the Hindi literature. The names of the daityas destroyed are as follows :—

Madhoo Kaitabh Mahikhasur, Dhumra Lochun, Chund, Mund, Rakta Bij, Nishumbha and Shumbha.

The *second part* of the same.

Chandee Ki Var, a supplement to the above.

(5) *Jnana Prabodha* taken from the Mahabharata devoted to the praise of God with illustrations from ancient history of the Hindus.

(6) *Chaupayan* or Quatrains which describe the twenty-four incarnations of Shiva.

(7) *Shastra-nama Mala* or the Name-string of weapons enumerating all kinds of arms used in the warfare of those days.

(8) *Savayya Batees.*—Thirty-two stanzas composed by the Guru himself in condemnation of idolatry, Phariseeism and sectarian prejudice and bigotry,

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extolling the love of God above all nominal adherence to the Puranas and the Qoran.

(9) Shabd Hazara—ten stanzas of Govind's own composition in adoration of God and condemnation of the worship of minor divinities and saints.

(10) *Stri Charitra*, or the "wiles of women," described in 404 stories which occupy nearly one-half of the whole collection.

(11) *Hikayat* or Tales. These are twelve in number and are composed in 866 lines of Persian poetry of the Masnavi type.

The Dasam Granth, like the Adi, is, of course, written in the Gurmukhi characters.

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APPENDIX II.

IS SIKHISM A MIXTURE?

Before discussing the distinguishing features of Sikhism it is necessary to explode the widely prevailing myth that Sikhism is a mixture of Hinduism and Muhammadanism. "The Sikhs are converts to a new religion, the seal of the double dispensation of Brahmá and Mahomet." Thus wrote Cunningham more than sixty years ago and the story has since been too often repeated by many a writer on Sikhism. Even Monier Williams, who ought to have known better, could not resist the temptation of ascribing the theistical character of Sikhism to the influence of Islam. "Nanak," says the late Boden Professor, "was partially Islamised, to the extent at least of denouncing idolatry."

It may be at once conceded that Islam had something to do with the advent of Sikhism. In fact, there might have been no Sikhism or it would have probably never appeared in this form if Islam had not crossed over the boundaries of India. But it does not mean that Sikhism is Islamic to any extent whatsoever.

It must be admitted that the impact of Islam stirred the Hindu community to its deepest foundations, and gave a powerful impetus to its thought and activity. But it was like rallying your forces when attacked by a powerful enemy, unlocking your magazines and arsenals to defend yourself from the onslaughts of the invader. The arms and ammunition are all yours and have always been there, it is the appearance of the enemy that makes you bring them out and use them to protect your homes and hearths. The religious activity displayed by the Hindus in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries has an instructive parallel in the political

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struggles they made to save themselves from extinction. Driven from the plains they retired to the wastes and deserts of Rajputana and the hills of the North and the South, keeping up the struggle until they vanquished their conquerors. Similarly in the religious struggle the outlying posts of Hinduism, *viz.*, the beliefs and practices of the lower classes were carried by Islam in the first assault, annihilating their defenders almost to a man.* It was at once found that such beliefs were untenable before the iconoclastic and fanatical creed of the Arabs. Two methods were adopted to save the Hindus from the impending destruction. The Brahmans fortified the social system and took shelter behind the walls of caste. Those who were left outside were destroyed. Those who were taken into the citadel were saved, with everything they held dear, whether gold or tinsel. The second method was to discard the vulnerable points, give up the rusty swords and battered armours of rotten beliefs and corrupted practices, and fight in the open field with flashing swords and thrice-tempered steel of the theistic doctrines of vigorous, manly, moral and philosophical Hinduism. This was the method adopted by Nanak and his followers.

It was in this way that Islam influenced Hinduism. Otherwise, as a well-known writer of Nanak's life says, the doctrines of Islam had as little to do with the formation of Nanak's doctrines as the forces of Babar with the creation of the Rajput Army that contested the sovereignty of India with him, under the leadership of Rana Sanga.† One necessitated the other, but did not form a part of it.

An examination of the so-called Moslem element in Sikhism would expose the hollowness of the view of the

* In the Punjab, particularly, the lower classes and even the peasantry, North of the Chenab, are almost wholly Muhammadan.

† Mulk Raj Bhalla—Nanak Charitra. (2nd ed., p. 234).

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indebtedness of Sikhism to Islam. The most important feature of Sikhism ascribed to the influence of Islam is its monotheistic character and at first sight it might appear that Nanak borrowed his monotheism from the Qoran. The following considerations, however, would show that such an inference would be entirely unwarranted :—

1. Nanak never had a Muhammadan teacher and knew very little of Persian and nothing of Arabic.*

2. His conception of God is entirely different from that given by Islam. The God of Islam is supposed to reside in the seventh heaven, at least that is supposed to be his favourite place where Muhammad in his Meraj or ascension is said to have met him. Nanak's God is omnipresent. The idea of any locality being the favourite residence of the deity is entirely absent from Nanak's teachings. Then again the Moslem God is anthropomorphic in character. Nanak's view of God is more pantheistic.

3. It would be absurd to suppose that it was Islam that taught the Hindus that God was one. The Hindus had realised the unity of God long before Muhammad, Christ, or even Moses was born.†

4. Nanak does not absolutely deny the existence of minor gods, and goddesses of Hindu mythology.

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* Ms. Or. 187 (Brit. Mus.) says Nanak learnt nothing but the letter *Alif*, the symbol of God's unity.

† Though not quite necessary to prove what few sensible people would deny, the following texts from the Vedas might be referred to. Rig. Veda :—1,164,46; III, 20, 3; VI, 41, 18; VIII, 8, 1; X, 81, 2; X, 81, 3; Yajur Veda :—22, 1; Atharva :—XIII, 4, 4, 5; XIII, 4, 14, 21, &c., &c.

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He simply enjoins the worship of one Supreme God in place of the worship of minor gods.

5. He does not positively repudiate the incarnations though he does not regard them as equal to the Deity.*

6. That I am not alone in rejecting the theory of Sikhism borrowing from Islam is shown by the views of many European writers. Dr. Trumpp corroborates the statement made above that Nanak's idea of God is more pantheistic than monotheistic, and observes that "*It is a mistake if Nanak is represented as having endeavoured to unite the Hindu and Muhammadan ideas about God. Nanak remained a thorough Hindu according to all his views.*" Malcolm says "*Though it (Sikhism) differs widely from the present worship of the Hindus it has been thought to have considerable analogy to the pure and simple religion originally followed by that nation.*" Gordon in his neat little treatise on "The Sikhs," says "Sikhism has had its roots solely in religious aspirations. It was a revolt against the tyranny of Brahmanism. *On throwing off the yoke, Nanak and his disciples reverted instinctively to the old theistic creed of their ancestors*" (p. 20).

Let us next turn to idol-worship which, according to Monier Williams, was rejected by Nanak under the influence of Islam. I do not deny that Islam might have had something to do with it, but certainly it was not Islam that taught Nanak or any other Hindu reformer, the baseness of idolatry. It is an admitted fact that idolatry was unknown

* See Barnett's *Hinduism*, p. 38.

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to the ancient Hindus. The Vedas never dreamt of it. Philosophical Hinduism had no place for it. The Jains thrust it upon Hindus and then it stuck to them. Still, however, great leaders of thought like Ramanuja placed it at the lowest rung of the devotional ladder, and suffered it to exist for the sake of the unenlightened.* Even Vaishnavism could "set its face against idolatry," and Kabir, a great Vaishnava leader, was a staunch iconoclast, and "there can be no doubt that the anti-idolatrous sect founded by Kabir grew out of Vaishnavism."† Nanak took the cue from Kabir, or his own original and powerful mind inspired him, and he tried "to restore a nation who had degenerated from their original worship into idolatry, and may be considered more in the light of a reformer than a subverter of the Hindu religion."‡

The next and the last prop of the Islamic-influence theory is the condemnation of caste by Nanak. In the first place it should be remembered that "there is no ground to contend that castes were altogether abolished by Nanak."§ He was himself married according to the caste rules, his son was married according to the caste rules, and he never called upon any of his followers to give up the caste distinction in eating or drinking or in the more important matter of marriage. What he said against caste was that nobody should expect any favour at the hands of God for belonging to higher castes, that "God does not care for your caste

* Few of the Hindus defend the idols except on the ground of these figures, before which they bend, being symbolical representations of the attributes of an all-powerful divinity. (Malcolm).

† Monier Williams. Prof. Wilson in his Oxford Lectures speaking about the ancient Hindus says "There seem to have been no images and no visible types of the objects of worship." Quoted by Elphinstone in his History. Vol. I, p. 73.

‡ Sir John Malcolm.

§ Malcolm.

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but for your actions." This is a position which Hinduism has never denied. The haughtiest Brahman has never claimed that his lot in the life to come would be a whit better for his being a Brahman. All that he claims is that his present superior position is due to some good actions in the previous life or lives, and he can claim some privilege in this life in the social organisation of his community. Nanak went only a little further and asserted that no caste, as such, was better or worse than another. And this is the position which the sacred books of the Hindus have held. Manu says, "A Brahman can fall to the position of a Sudra while a Sudra can rise to that of a Brahman and so on,"† according to his *guna*, *karma*, and *subbava*, *i.e.*, qualifications, calling and character respectively. The same criterion is laid down in the Apastambha Sutras‡ which lay down that by righteousness a person can rise to the higher and higher Varnas and by unrighteousness fall to the lower and lower Varna or caste.

Nor was Nanak the first Hindu to have declaimed against caste. Buddha was the first Hindu who, long before Christianity and more than a thousand years before the birth of Islam, had revived the real test of Varna by levelling down the artificial fabric of caste system by preaching his gospel of equality, liberty and fraternity. The Puranas had followed Buddha in their disregard of caste distinctions. They were open to all, and the gospel of Bhakti was preached by them alike to the prince and the peasant, the Brahman and the Chandal.‡ The democratical nature of the Bhakti School

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* Manu, X. 65.

† Quoted by Dayananda Sarasvati: See Satyartha Prakasha, p. 90.

‡ It even triumphed over caste, for an enthusiastic love of Rama or Krishna was theoretically a bond of union among human beings stronger than all social ties, and was incompatible with differences of rank or antagonisms of interest—Monier Williams: Brahm. and Hind., pp. 63-4.

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leads us to the consideration of another phenomenon, which, so far as I am aware, has not been noticed by any European writer, I mean the antagonism of the Bhaktas or Sadhus to priest-craft. In Asia the ascetics have always been at war with the priests. The former stand upon purity of mind, charity, humility, devotion and love of God, while the latter stick to more or less mechanical religion, and cannot tolerate any violence of theological dogma or ritualistic observance of their faith.* The Muhammadans are said to have crucified Mansur and flayed Shams-i-Tabrez alive for deviating from the orthodox beliefs. Khusru lived under a broad-minded monarch† and could, therefore, boldly defy the Mullas and declare his contempt for Mussalmani or Islam.

Nanak was a Bhakta or Dervish and true to the traditions of his school could not be very particular in his allegiance to the caste-rules of the priests.

Nor was Nanak the first even among the moderns to have raised his voice against the rigour of caste. Basva, a reformer of the southern Mahratta country who flourished about 1250 A. D., had already attacked the problem. "Though a Brahman himself he denied the superiority of Brahmans, and tried his best to abolish the distinction of caste."‡ After him Ramanand, a Brahman, had taken, as his disciples, men from the highest to the lowest caste. Of his two most famous disciples, one, Kabir, was a weaver, the other, Ravi Das, a cobbler.

Kabir being a weaver himself could not have upheld the tyranny of caste, and his denunciation of it is as bitter and

* Even in Europe the Pope hurled his condemnation at Manichaeism and Gnosticism—Prof. Oman: *Mystics, &c., of India*, (p. 8).

† Ala-ud-Din (1296-1316) used to say that Government had nothing to do with religion which was simply an amusement of private life. Ferishta (quoted by F. W. Thomas, p. 87).

‡ Dr. J. N. Bhattacharya. *Hindu Castes and Sects*, p. 435.

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powerful as his caste was low. Nanak was a high caste Khatri, but having taken up the functions of a religious teacher, he could not defer to the superiority of Brahmans with any show of reasonableness even if he was not moved by more ethical and higher humanitarian and democratic motives.

It will appear from the foregoing remarks that Islam had very little to do with the reformed system of Nanak. "It will be seen," says Thomas "that Hinduism has borrowed but little directly from Islam. Wherever an attempt has been made to fuse the two religions, the essence of Muhammadanism has remained apart. Muhammad and Qoran have contributed nothing of their spirit. The personality of the Prophet has never proved attractive. Thus the mission of the Prophet must be admitted to have failed in India. A strictly Semitic and non-philosophical religion could have but little effect on a system which was rooted in Philosophy and rich in speculation of every kind."*

From what is said above it will be clear that although precipitated by Islam, Sikhism owes nothing to that religion. It is, on the other hand, a phase of Hindu religious development and has, in consequence, great similarity with main features of Hinduism. Still, however, there are certain points in which it stands out as a distinct system and we shall now proceed to consider the more important of these points of distinction.

* F. W. Thomas in Le Bas Prize Essay on "*Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus* in India, (p. 97).

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APPENDIX III.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF SIKHISM.

The chief point in Nanak's doctrine was the unity of the Supreme Being. The principal attributes of the Deity are set forth in the opening passage of the Adi-Granth which runs as follows :

"One *Omkar* whose name is truth, the creator, the spirit without fear, without enmity, having a timeless form, not produced from the womb. The True One existed in the beginning, even before the beginning of time. The True One is, and, O Nanak ! the True One will also be."

The quotation will clearly show that Nanak's conception of God was the same as that given in the Hindu sacred books. The addition of the syllable *Om* stamps the whole passage as Hindu in form as well as meaning. It will be also admitted that the idea of the unity of God was not a strange one to the Hindus. Nevertheless it was Guru Nanak who proclaimed the oneness of the Deity in the Panjab, after the idea, in its practical aspect, had been lost for centuries in this part of the country.

In one respect Nanak surpassed Kabir and every other reformer produced by Hinduism. Since the Hindus borrowed the doctrine of divine incarnation from the Jainas, no Hindu leader had shown the courage to question its correctness. Rama and Krishna had received the homage of everyone as Divine beings. It was Nanak who boldly questioned their divinity and brought them down to the level of mortals, and declared that the Almighty who created and controlled the whole universe could not add anything to His greatness by assuming human shape to destroy such wretches as Ravana and Kansa.* Guru Govind Singh went further, and stated :—

* Rag Asa Mah. I.

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"He created millions of worms like Krishna, made many Ramas and destroyed them. Many Muhammads came into the world. All died when their time expired."*

It has been pointed out before that Guru Nanak's idea of God is Pantheistic and not quite theistic like that of Islam. "We can distinguish in the Granth," says Trumpp "a grosser and a finer kind of Pantheism. The grosser Pantheism identifies all things with the Absolute, the universe in its various forms being considered the expansion of it; the finer Pantheism, on the other hand, distinguishes between the Absolute and the finite being and borders frequently on Theism. Though God is producing all things out of Himself and is filling all, yet He remains distinct from the creatures and is not contaminated by the Maya, as a lotus in a pond of water remains distinct from the water surrounding it."†

The next important point on which we find some difference between common Hinduism and Sikhism, as embodied in the teachings of the Gurus, is the absence of idol worship. It is true that in the Panjab the idols count among their worshippers almost all who call themselves Sikhs, still the spirit of Sikhism is opposed to the worship of images. There are in the *Adi* as well as the *Dasam Granth* hundreds of passages condemning the worship of images in the strongest terms. I have hinted elsewhere that the Gurus did not deny the existence of the various gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon, but it can be positively stated that they never allowed the worship of these deities. The statement of Trumpp that Nanak never forbade the worship of other gods cannot consequently be maintained. The rejection of the worship of everything except God was the most important point, in fact, which gave Sikhism the character of a Reform or Revival. I wonder how Dr. Trumpp could

* Vichitra Natak.

† Trumpp's *Adi Granth*, p. C.

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make such a statement in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. "Shall we, O brother," says Nanak," worship gods and goddesses? What can I ask of them and what can they give?"* Again we find him saying "Do not fall into doubt, worship none but God, no tombs or shrines,"† and so on.

It is curious, however, that inspite of these injunctions not only is the worship of images common enough among the Sikhs, but a strange form of worship which Guru Nanak could not foresee, has grown up among them, I mean the worship of the Granth. There is no doubt that the enlightened section of the community bow before their sacred book merely as a sign of respect, but among the masses the Granth is worshipped almost exactly in the same way as the best of idols was ever worshipped by the most idolatrous of Hindus. At the Golden Temple of Amritsar and at every other Sikh place of pilgrimage and even in ordinary Dharmsalas or Sikh temples the same routine of worship is gone through as in the temples of Mathura and Brindaban in connection with the Hindu idols. The same incense and candle burning, the same kind of *arati*, the same blowing of conches and so on, is gone through in Sikh Dharmsalas as in the Hindu temples. Still, however, it must be admitted that the Sikhs do not deify their book as the Hindus deify their idols, and Granth worship is not in all details the same as idol worship.

The third characteristic of Sikhism, as founded by Nanak and before its modification by Govind Singh, is the utter disregard for form. Nanak's most powerful attacks are directed against those who attach more importance to the external paraphernalia of religion and do not enter into the spirit of the creed they follow. Nanak respected every religion so far

* Sorath Mah I.

† *Ibid.*

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as the real essence of it was concerned but regarded each one of them with contempt where its votaries stopped short at the mechanical part of it. The Sandhya of the Hindus, the Nimaz of the Mussalmans, the scruples of the Jainas, none found favour with him if they were not accompanied by a pure mind, a charitable disposition, a kind heart and a genuine love for God. This beauty of Sikhism as a religious system was lost when the tenth Guru felt himself forced by circumstances to turn Sikhism into a political weapon. Under him certain observances came to occupy the same place in Sikhism as circumcision among the Mussalmans, sacred thread among the Hindus and baptism among the Christians. Since the new dispensation of Guru Govind Singh no one can be a Sikh, properly so called, unless he keeps his hair and beard untouched by a razor or scissors, not to speak of other observances of a minor importance. Now it is a common sight to see Sikhs quarrelling over the removal of long hair by a member of their community and Sikh preachers devoting more energy to the propagation of the long-hair creed than the real soul-uplifting teachings of the Gurus.*

The fourth and the last special feature of Sikhism is the great emphasis laid in its teaching on *Nám*. This means the constant repetition of any of the names of God, and curious as it may seem, considering that Sikhism does not recognise divine incarnation, the favourite name of God in the Granth is Rama. This doctrine of *Nám* was originally borrowed from Vaishnavism but in Sikhism it has been given the foremost position so as to supersede as a mode of salvation the performance of Yajnas, the giving of alms and even the acquisition of *Jnana*.

* I fully sympathise with the Sikhs in their efforts to keep up what may be called the insignia of Sikhism, for, otherwise, they would be in danger of losing their individuality as a great community. Nevertheless it is true that as religious system Sikhism has lost a great deal by being burdened over with symbols and ceremonies like other religions.

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These are about all the points which distinguish Sikhism from other Hindu sects. In social polity too there are so few points of difference between Sikhism and Hinduism that it is not always easy for a stranger to tell the one from the other. Still, however, it may be pointed out that as a unit of Society, the Sikh is very different from his Hindu brother. Generally tall and stately, with long hair and a carefully-kept long beard, he can be easily recognised even in a crowd of Hindus. He never goes out without a turban, a cap or hat being strictly forbidden to him. In eating and drinking he follows the Hindus except in so far that he is generally a meat-eater and not so strict in *Chauka* system. He scrupulously abstains from smoking, it being most stringently interdicted by Guru Govind Singh. Though there are few vegetarians among the Sikhs they will not eat flesh if the animal has not been killed with one stroke of the sword, or, in the case of the fowl, by one *jhatka* or jerk wringing off the neck. The cow is as sacred to the Sikh as to the Hindus, but he has no scruples about the pig of which, in fact, he is particularly fond, perhaps as a relic of his ancient hatred of the Muslim.

There is not much difference in the social polity of the Sikhs and the Hindus. But the Sikhs are not so strict in the observance of caste restrictions in eating and drinking and in matrimonial affairs. Among the lower classes, (and the majority of Sikhs are recruited from what are considered lower classes) these restrictions have in fact become very loose. It should, however, be remembered that they still stick to the Hindu policy of exclusiveness towards non-Hindus and Sikhism is by no means a proselytizing religion.* Nor are the Sikhs staunch adherents of the vedic ceremonies. The sacred thread is not a necessity with them,

* Guru Govind Singh converted some sweepers but the orthodoxy was too strong even for him and the new converts have never become an integral part of the Hindu or Sikh community.

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this initiation ceremony being superseded by the *Pahul* which has been described elsewhere (p. 81 n.) Lately there has been a great agitation among the Sikhs to have an independent marriage ceremonial. The result of this agitation was the Anand Marriage Bill introduced into the Supreme Council by the Maharaja (then Tikka Sahib) of Nabha which was passed into Law in 1909.*

According to this system the Brahman is not a necessity and the Vedic texts are entirely dispensed with. Nor is the worship of Ganesha or the Planets allowed. The bride and the bridegroom are less shy of each other, and instead of going round the fire as in a Vedic marriage the parties go round the Adi Granth which is always on the spot. Some

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* The Act is as follows :—

Whereas it is expedient to remove any doubts as to the validity of the marriage ceremony common among the Sikhs called Anand; it is hereby enacted as follows :—

Short title and extent.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Anand Marriage Act, 1909; and

Validity of Anand marriages.

(2) All marriages which may be or may have been duly solemnized according to the Sikh marriage ceremony called Anand shall be, and shall be deemed to have been, with effect from the date of the solemnization of each respectively, good and valid in law.

Exemption of certain marriages from Act.

(3) Nothing in this Act shall apply to—

(*a*) Any marriage between persons not professing the Sikh religion, or

(*b*) Any marriage which has been judicially declared to be null and void.

Saving of marriages solemnized according to other ceremonies.

(4) Nothing in this Act shall affect the validity of any marriage duly solemnized according to any other marriage ceremony customary among the Sikhs.

Non-validation of marriages within prohibited degrees.

(5) Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to validate any marriage between persons who are related to each other in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the customary law of the Sikhs, render a marriage between them illegal.

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texts from the Adi Granth are read, and though they were originally meant to describe in a figurative way the union of the human soul with the Supreme Being, they are made to serve the purpose of sanctifying the union of the bride and the bridegroom. The ceremony was originally resorted to only by the lower classes to celebrate widow marriages and such irregular connections but ever since the separatist tendency has manifested itself among the Sikhs the ceremony is coming into the vogue even among the higher classes.

The festivals of the Sikhs are almost the same as those observed by the Hindus. The Sikhs have, however, added to the Hindu festival of Holi an additional holiday called the *Hola Mahalla* which follows the last day of the Holi carnival. The birthdays and death anniversaries of their Gurus are also observed as holidays by the Sikhs.

The chief peculiarity of the Sikh, however, lies in his soldierly habits and qualifications. Originally no better than the common peasantry of the Panjab the Sikhs were turned by the tenth Guru into a nation of warriors and heroes who would dare the lion in his own den and challenge the dreaded Aurangzeb in his own court.*

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* Daya Singh went with the Guru's letter to the Court of Aurangzeb. He neither bent his head nor uttered any word of salutation. He simply shouted Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahguru ji ki Fatch and handed the letter to the emperor.

About 1,740, one Massa Ranghar, Moghul officer in Amritsar, turned the sacred temple of Har Mandir into his pleasure hall and used to hold dancing parties within its precincts. The grounds were further desecrated by smoking and spitting on the sacred floor. The news of this dishonour to their holiest place was carried by a Sikh to Mahtab Singh (a Jat of Mirankot) and Sukha Singh (a carpenter of Mari Kambo) two of the Sikhs who were then in hiding in Bikanir. "How could you see the temple desecrated and still live," said they to the bringer of the news, and girding up their swords started at once to Amritsar. Disguising themselves as Muhammadans they filled two bags with pebbles, rounded to represent coins, and entered into the presence of Massa under the pretence of paying their revenues. While one held him in conversation the other took out his sword and cut off the

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"A living spirit" wrote Cunningham, some 70 years ago, possesses the whole Sikh people and the impress of Govind has not only elevated and altered the constitution of their minds, but has operated materially and given amplitude to their physical frames. The features and external form of a whole people have been modified, and a Sikh chief is not more distinguishable by his stately person and free and manly bearing than a minister of his faith is by a lofty thoughtfulness of look which marks the fervour of his soul, and his persuasion of the near presence of the Divinity." The physical superiority and the great military qualities of the Sikhs were amply shown during the Anglo-Sikh wars of the middle part of the last century. "Never did a native army having so relatively slight an advantage in numbers fight a battle with the British in which the issue was so doubtful as at Firozshah; and if the victory was decisive, opinion remains divided as to what the result might have been if the Sikh troops had found commanders with sufficient capacity to give their qualities full opportunity."* "None have fought more stoutly and stubbornly against us, none more loyally and gallantly for us, than the Sikhs."†

Even at the present time the Sikhs are admittedly the best fighting race in India. The flower of the British Indian army are supplied by the Sikhs. "Wherever" says General Gordon, "there has been hard fighting to be done, there they have been found in the forefront, maintaining their high reputation for steadfast fidelity, dogged tenacity and dauntless courage,—the undying heritage of the Sikhs."

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tyrant's head. Before the courtiers could recover from their surprise, the heroes rode away through the town and out of their reach. So literally was the confidence of Govind justified, who often used to say that his sparrows would bring down hawks, and a single Sikh defy *Sawa lakh*.

* Sir G. Cough and Arthur Innes. *The Sikhs and Sikh wars.* (p. 42).

† General Sir John J. H. Gordon K. C. B. *The Sikhs* (p. 3).

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